YEAR 2000 ASSESSMENT

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Universal Elementary Education in Rajasthan

A Study with Focus on Innovative Strategies

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Human Resource Development
Government of India**

**National Institute of Educational
Planning and Administration
New Delhi**

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Editorial Note

The EFA 2000 Assessment process in India was set in motion around the middle of 1999. The basic framework for the review process was given by the UNESCO. The framework consisted of eighteen indicators ranging from literacy rate and enrollment figures to allocation of finances to primary education. Information on these indicators was to form the overall framework for assessing the progress made. In India, a National Assessment Group was set up at the MHRD to coordinate the effort. The Group felt during its deliberations that mere statistical indicators will not capture the whole gamut of efforts that have gone on during the decade. It was decided that while data on the quantitative indicators will be compiled, effort will be made to carry out a qualitative review of the situation in a more comprehensive and objective manner with the help of independent reviewers.

In delineating the broad contours for the review process, developments in basic education during the EFA decade was kept as the main focus. However, it was felt that in the Indian context, a natural time period for any such review was the launching of the National Policy on Education in 1986. It is not difficult to find the rationale for this decision. In India's not so smooth journey towards the goal of UEE, National Policy on Education - 1986 stands out as a significant landmark. The NPE had been formulated after conducting a prolonged nationwide debate on the problems and issues confronting the education system in the country. Further, along with the formulation of the policy a "Programme of Action" was adopted which clearly outlined the strategies and processes to be pursued for achieving UEE. This was followed by a framework of partnership between the Central and State Governments on a massive scale through a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes. With this in the backdrop, any review of EFA will virtually be a reflection on the implementation of recommendations made by the NPE. Thus, for the present qualitative review, though the 1990's remain the focus, developments in the post-NPE period form the larger canvass.

As is well known, 1990's saw the opening of the primary education scene to external assistance on a fairly large scale. Possibly as part of the commitments made by the international donor community at the Jomtien Conference, the country saw the emergence of a large multi-State programme for EFA under the banner of District Primary Education Programme. Alongside this, Rajasthan initiated a fairly large programme of EFA under the name of *Lok Jumbish*. In the changed scenario, primary education in India truly became a subject of international scrutiny. The EFA projects have been in operation, gradually expanding to cover half the country, for six to eight years. These EFA initiatives coupled with various centrally sponsored schemes have undoubtedly made 1990's the most intensive period of primary education development in India. Meanwhile, the literacy scene also got galvanized with mass literacy campaigns stretching across the length and breadth of the country through the National Literacy Mission. Therefore, any EFA assessment exercise carried out at the present juncture will throw light on the performance of these initiatives.

Another development in the last decade that forms a part of the backdrop for the review is the Supreme Court judgment which, interpreting the constitutional provisions, declared basic education as a fundamen-

tal right of every citizen requiring the State to make necessary provisions as a basic obligation. Currently, a bill to amend the Constitution is under the consideration of the Parliament to incorporate education upto fourteen years as a fundamental right of every citizen. Simultaneously, at the international level, basic education got a prime place in the development discourse as a component of the Human Development Index brought out by UNDP. These national and international developments have transformed the status of UEE from merely being a public sector activity of the State to that of a legal obligation, societal responsibility and moral commitment. To what extent have these been operationalised will be reflected in the review of the situation.

Having drawn the broad framework for the review exercise, the National Assessment Group identified a number of themes covering a range of topics from literacy to financing of elementary education. A meeting of authors was held to discuss the process of preparing the review and to get a common perspective on the purpose and expected outcome of the exercise. The reviews are based essentially on secondary sources, which document the developments in recent years. Each paper attempts to situate the review in the larger education scene in the country and draw broad directions for the future. However, the structure of each paper was decided by the author keeping in view the theme being dealt with.

Initial drafts of the papers were shared by the authors in two Workshops attended by several Central and State Government officials, educationists and representatives of international agencies. The papers were revised based on the feedback received during the Seminars. Individual discussions were also held with several of the authors while editing the papers. Some papers were rewritten. Several papers came at the last minute with very little time to edit or revise. Therefore, one can say that the papers as shared in this series are at different stages of finality. Some authors have already indicated their desire to revise the paper. Nevertheless it was considered important that they are shared in their present form at the World Education Forum being held at Dakar, Senegal from 26-28, April 2000. Thus, these twentyone thematic review papers and four state specific case studies, listed below, form part of the country portfolio on EFA 2000 Assessment along with the national report on the current status of EFA in India.

Thematic Reviews

Adult Literacy: Mass literacy campaigns of the NLM changed the common perception of adult education programmes and established that if done in the right manner they can influence the scene significantly. But what has been the ground reality? What has happened beyond literacy campaigns? Many scholars consider that the value of the literacy campaigns lies not so much in imparting reading and writing skills to adult illiterates but in their capacity to influence the quality of life of the people. There are three papers dealing with literacy and adult education: *(1) Indian Engagement with Adult Education and Literacy, (2) Literacy Campaigns and Social Mobilization, and (3) Changing Concepts and Shifting Goals: Post-literacy and Continuing Education in India.* Together, the papers give a retrospective overview of the concepts involved, a review of the progress made and also take a critical look at the processes adopted.

Girls' Education: Many consider that the problem of universal elementary education in India is essentially a problem of girls' education. The National policy on Education-1986 pointed out that the problem of girls' education can not be dealt with in isolation from the broader questions of women's status. In fact, this also led to special programmes addressing the issue of women empowerment such as *Mahila Samakhya*. Keeping this in view, two papers are prepared: *(1) Education of Girls in India: An Assessment;* and *(2) Education*

and the Status of Women. The papers while sounding positive highlight the long distance yet to be traversed for achieving the goal of UEE for girls and for addressing the issue of gender equity in education.

Early Childhood Care and Education: Increasing empirical evidence points to the value of providing pre-school experience to children not only for improving their readiness for schooling but also as part of meeting the basic needs of children. The NPE called for taking an integrated view of early childhood care and education. The paper on *Early Childhood Care and Education* examines the situation comprehensively dealing with school based pre-primary education programmes as well as the more wide spread ICDS programme.

Reaching the Marginalised: Data clearly point out that several groups of children continue to remain on the margin raising serious questions of equity in educational development. Many groups in India fall into this category, which include the urban poor, child workers, children of ethnic minorities, and children with special needs. Four papers deal with this issue: *(1) Children, Work and Education: Rethinking on Out-of-School Children, (2) Education of the Urban Disadvantaged, (3) Education among Tribals, and (4) Education of Children with Special Needs.* The four papers though on diverse themes, assess the reach of the current programmes of EFA in meeting the educational needs of the marginalised groups.

Teacher and Teacher Education: As the Education Commission 1964-66 pointed out, the destiny of the country is being shaped in the classrooms. And, it is the teachers who hold the key position in determining the course of transaction that takes place in schools and classrooms. Thus, an analysis of the status of teachers and their professional preparation needs a close analysis in the context of EFA. Two papers on the subject are presented: *(1) Primary Teacher Training in the EFA Decade, and (2) Status of Elementary Teachers in India.* The first paper takes stock of the programmes of teacher training in terms of institutional arrangements available as well as innovative efforts initiated in recent years. The second paper adopts a broad perspective on the subject and deals with different categories of teachers involved in basic education programmes.

Teaching-Learning Material: Curriculum and textbook preparation has come to be generally perceived as a centralized activity carried out, directly or indirectly, under the control and supervision of State Government bodies. One could see significant changes in this regard during the 1990s. The first steps in decentralizing material production to make it more locally relevant were taken by the National Literacy Mission. The EFA projects also gave tremendous impetus to the process of producing child friendly textbooks. New framework of collaboration between Government institutions and NGOs also seem to have emerged. But the area is still rid with many critical issues. These are dealt with in the paper: *Texts in Context: An EFA 2000 Review - Development of Curricula, Textbooks, and Teaching Learning Materials.*

Media in EFA: The 1990s, particularly through the mass literacy campaigns, demonstrated the potential of traditional media and methods in the field of education. Use of electronic media in building a positive environment in favour of EFA efforts also got a big boost during the period. What has been the overall role of media in relation to EFA? How can the profile of media in EFA efforts be enhanced? These and other related questions have been systematically addressed in the review paper on *Role of Media in Education For All.*

Quality of Schooling: The NPE redefined UEE to include not only provision of universal access and univer-

sal participation but also achievement of acceptable standards of learning. This brought to centre stage issues related to quality. Two papers address this issue: *(1) Learning Conditions for Primary Education: A Review* and *(2) Learner Achievement in Primary Schools.*

Management Strategies for EFA: The NPE advocated for adopting a participatory approach for educational management and considered the goal of EFA unachievable without the active involvement of the civil society. Building partnership between Government and Non-Government agencies has been repeatedly endorsed by policy makers. But what space do they really occupy in the overall EFA effort? Similarly, role of private efforts in provision of education has come for serious consideration in recent years. The new *Panchayati Raj* initiatives take management issues into the larger context of political administration. These are the themes and issues addressed in a set of four papers: *(1) Role and Contribution of NGOs to Basic Education, (2) Decentralisation of Education, (3) Role of Private Schools in Basic Education, and (4) Participatory Micro-Planning for Universal Primary Education.*

Financing of Elementary Education: The move to make basic education a fundamental right and the accompanying effort to assess the funds required for universalizing elementary education has brought to sharp focus the question of financing elementary education in India. Acceptance of relatively large size support from external funding agencies for the purpose has compounded the issue. There are some who still consider that India can and should finance its basic education from domestic sources. Expectation in some quarters that privatisation could help mobilize substantial resources for EFA has added a third dimension to the debate. These issues are dealt with in the paper: *Financing of Elementary Education in India.*

State Specific Case Studies

It is fully recognized that sustainable change and development in basic education is highly conditioned by State specific contexts. Mere funds and schemes from the Centre will not guarantee the achievement of UEE goals. It is highly dependent on traditions and values of the local people; commitment and enthusiasm of the State level educational leadership; and capacity to adopt innovative approaches. Viewed from such a perspective authentic accounts of EFA achievement would demand understanding the processes, problems and prospects of achieving EFA in every State independently. But, that would have been too ambitious. In depth analysis of the situation was carried out in four selected States, namely, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. From the EFA process and achievement point of view, the four States get self-selected. Success of Himachal Pradesh came into lime light with the PROBE study which pointed out how the State has gone way ahead of some of its neighbouring States. The study on Himachal Pradesh which is aptly entitled: *Primary Education in Himachal Pradesh: Examining a Success Story,* captures the factors contributing to the relatively quick progress made by the State. The Mizoram study: *EFA in Mizoram: The Dynamics of Success* brings out the unique role played by local youth and women organizations within the background of pioneering work done by religious organizations. Tamil Nadu case study, *Progress Towards Education for All: The Case of Tamil Nadu,* presents a success story of a different kind. The overt social policies and programmes of the State, including the famous Nutritious Noon Meal Scheme, are attributed to have made a significant impact on school enrollment in the 1980s. Subsequently, with its apparent success in controlling the population growth, the state has got the opportunity to pursue quality concerns of EFA in an effective manner. Rajasthan cannot stake claim to join the company of the other three States based on quantitative progress in EFA. In the league table of States of India, Rajasthan continues to occupy a very low rank. The case of EFA in Rajasthan is entitled, *Universal*

Elementary Education in Rajasthan: A Study with Focus on Innovative Strategies. The study takes a look at exemplar practices adopted in two major programmes contributing to EFA goals, namely, *Shiksha Karmi* and *Lok Jumbish*.

The review exercise was carried out with the full involvement of the Department of Education, Government of India. I should record my thanks to the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO for giving not only full support and cooperation but also a free hand in carrying out the work. In particular, I should acknowledge the special interest taken by Mr. Champak Chatterji and Mr. Abhimanyu Singh. The task was carried out with financial assistance from UNESCO and UNDP. Support has also been forthcoming from other agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank in carrying out several supportive activities involved in the exercise. Without this generous support it would not have been possible to complete the work.

In the beginning, the idea of bringing together more than twentyfive experts from across the country to contribute to the review series appeared to be too ambitious. But the personal commitment of the authors saw the whole exercise through. Editing the papers, smoothening the sharp edges and filling in the fuzzy spots, but without disturbing the integrity of the arguments of the reviewers was a challenging task. But the exercise has been done in a spirit of collaboration contributing to the common cause of achieving the goals of EFA. I would like to thank all the authors for the unhesitating professional support and friendly cooperation extended in completing the work.

The EFA 2000 Assessment process began nearly a year ago. The project including the preparation of the national EFA Report was implemented by NIEPA. Unquestioned support from the Director of NIEPA and the Administration was critical for the completion of the work. Bringing out the papers in print in record time was possible due to the total involvement of the Publication Unit of NIEPA. I should acknowledge the professional help and guidance given by Professor M.S. Yadav in editing the papers. Contribution of Dr.Mona Sedwal to the whole exercise was enormous. Working as a single person EFA Cell, she coordinated a variety of activities, apart from contributing substantially to the editing work.

The review papers may not be euphoric about the status of EFA in the country. Yet, all of them are emphatic that the 1990s have broken new grounds in almost every area of basic education whether the reference is to adult literacy, decentralized planning, improved access, preparation of teaching-learning material or reaching the marginalised. Progress during the last decade demonstrates that though difficult, the EFA goals are not unachievable. It is hoped that the objective documentation resulting from the exercise will help steer the EFA activities in the year 2000 and onwards with increased pace and intensity.

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About the Author

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Abbreviations

AWCs	Anganwadi Centres
BCC	Building Construction Committee
BEMC	Block Educational Management Committee
BSG	Block Steering Group
BSS	Balika Shikshan Shivir
DFID	Development for International Development
DIETs	District Institutes of Education and Training
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EFA	Education For All
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GOI	Government of India
GOR	Government of Rajasthan
HQ	Head Quarters
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Service
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
ISI	Bureau of Indian Standards
LJ	Lok Jumbish
LJP	Lok Jumbish Parishad
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MIS	Management Information System
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MPK	Mahila Prashikshan Kendras
NAR	Net Attendance Ratio
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NFE	Non Formal Education
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations

NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NLM	National Literacy Mission
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organization
ORG	Operation Research Group
PROBE	Public Report on Basic Education
PROPEL	Promoting Primary and Elementary Education
PS	Primary School
R&D	Research and Development
RPM	Review and Planning Meeting
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIERT	State Institute of Educational Research and Training
SKB	Shiksha Karmi Board
SKP	Shiksha Karmi Parishad
SKs	Shiksha Karmi's
SM	School Mapping
SRT	State Resource Team
SSP	Sahaj Shiksha Programme
SWRC	Social Work and Research Centre
SY	Saraswati Yojana
TISS	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
TLC	Total Literacy Campaign
VT	Voluntary Teacher
UEE	Universalization of Elementary Education
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisations
UPE	Universalisation of Primary Education
UPS	Upper Primary School
UTs	Union Territories
VECs	Village Education Committee's
VER	Village Education Register

Introduction

In the Indian rural context, education being available to the rural poor does not only mean availability of physical structure of an institution called school, it also means availability of an appropriate functional mode of education which satisfies the aspirations of the people. Lack proper schooling facilities coupled with non-functioning existing schools has made the situation quite alarming especially in cases of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh which are educationally the most backward states of India. Educational planning approaches have failed to offer appropriate solutions to these problems. Compounding the problem, the information base of educational planning too does not capture the situation authentically as it should.

This paper aims at addressing these issues in the context of Universalisation of Elementary Education in Rajasthan.* The educational backwardness of Rajasthan can be ascribed partly to its harsh geography and scattered habitations. Its feudal society imposes a low status to women. Access to education is limited because of both availability and social customs. Efforts based on conventional approaches have failed to overcome these problems. Innovative flexible programmes which address the needs of the diverse areas and communities have to be conceptualised. *Shiksha Karmi* and *Lok Jumbish* are two such programmes which have successfully worked on a fairly large scale. The approach followed by both these programmes is process based - with participatory learning, partnership with NGOs, flexibility of management, creation of multiple levels of leadership and integration with mainstream education. This paper will discuss the strategies and processes of *Shiksha Karmi* and *Lok Jumbish* projects and their significance in educational planning.

Rajasthan: Land and People

Rajasthan is situated in the north-western part of India. With an area of 342 thousand square kilometres, it is the second largest state of India. The area of Rajasthan is nearly equivalent to countries like Norway, Poland and Italy, but the size of population is about 8 to 10 times more than these countries. The state has an estimated total population of 52 million in 1999. The growth rate of population in the state has been conspicuously higher than the national average. Between 1951 to 1991 population has recorded almost three-fold increase. Even then the density of population at 154 persons per sq. km. is significantly lower than the Indian average of 299 persons per sq. km. Administratively, the state is divided into 32 districts, which are further sub-divided into 237 development blocks (see Table 1.1).

The Aravalli Hill Ranges from the North-west and South-west divide the state approximately into the western arid and eastern semi-arid region. It is

Table 1.1: Rajasthan and India: Basic Statistics

			Rajasthan	India	Share of Rajasthan in India (in %)
Area (in Sq.Km.)			342239	3287263	10.41
Administrative Structure					
A.	Districts		32	536	5.97
B.	Development Blocks		237	5428	4.37
C.	No. of inhabited villages		37889	587226	6.45
Demography (1991 Census)					
A.	Population (in Million)				
		Persons	44.006	846.303	5.20
			(52.639)	(981.392)	(5.36)
		Male	23.043	439.23	5.25
			(27.521)	(508.174)	(5.42)
		Female	20.963	407.072	5.15
			(25.118)	(473.15)	(5.31)
B.	Density of Population		129	274	
	(per Sq.Km.)		(154)	(299)	
C.	% of SC to total population	17.29	16.48	5.5	
D.	% of ST to total population	12.44	8.01	8.08	
E.	Sex Ratio		910	927	
Literacy Rate					
		Persons	38.55	52.21	
		Male	54.99	64.13	
		Female	20.44	39.29	
Health condition					
A.	Life expectancy at birth		58	59.4	
B.	Infant mortality rate		85	74	
Economic condition					
A.	Per-capita income in Rs.				
	(at current prices) (1997-98)	9215	13193		
	(at constant prices of 1980-81)	2215	3131		
B.	Work participation rate (1991)	38.87	37.46		

Note: Figures in parentheses represent the estimated population of 1999.

Sources: Census Reports, 1991

Economic Survey, 1998-99, Govt. of India, Ministry of Finance, Economic Division.

also major water divide, the western part having severe paucity of water. One-third of the state falling in the western and south-western part is covered by Thar Desert characterised by extreme extreme temperature and semi-arid conditions. Rajasthan has diverse culture and rich heritage of handicrafts, architecture, music, dance and folk arts which are the products of a complex and pluralistic society. Feudal values of the past continues to exist in various forms. Caste-based communities and tribes dominate the social structure of the state. They have distinctive social organisation, customs, religion and languages. Untouchability still persists in the some parts of rural areas and lower ranked castes are socially isolated. The tribes are doubly disadvantaged by living in geographically remote areas. From the educational point of view , these communities are worse off than the rest of the population.

A variety of social, cultural and historical factors have conspired to give rise to a condition in Rajasthan that may be described as extremely adverse to women. Peculiar geophysical conditions and ecological degradation have added to the drudgery of the daily life of women. Scarcity of

Table 1.2: Indicators of Human Development: 1997

Indicator	Rajasthan	India
Birth Rate (per 1000)	33.6	28.5
Death Rate (per 1000)	9.3	9.0
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 birth)	85	74
Under 5 Mortality (per 1000 birth)	127	119
Maternal Mortality (per 1000 birth)	55	45
Children born with low birth weight (%)	39	33
Life expectancy at birth	58.0	59.4
Household access to manmade water sources (%)	56	75
Average radial distance covered by a public health centre (in Km.)	8.3	6.8
Percentage of births by institutional medical attention	8.1	22.3
Domicillary birth attended by untrained persons	67.5	50
Povert Rate (%)	26	36
Population having access to electricity	31	53
Road length per 100 sq.km. of area	36.3	62.1
Average age of marriage of girls	14.6	17.2

Source: Lok Jumbish - Phase III -1998-2003, Project Document, June 1998

water, fuel and fodder force the women to walk long distances to fetch water and firewood. There is unequal access to health and nutrition and this bias exists right from birth. In allocation of food and healthcare boys are given priority. An overwhelming number of women are ravaged by repeated reproduction. In spite of the fact that healthcare facilities have expanded rapidly in the state, the maternal mortality rate continues to be very high. Ninety per cent of the deliveries in the rural areas are conducted at home by untrained personnel. The traditional role relegates women to a voiceless existence, born to serve the family. Female infanticide is practised in many areas. Practice of child-marriage is prevalent in the state. Average age of marriage of girls is only 14.6 years as against 17.2 years for India as a whole (see Table 1.2). The sex ratio of the state has been consistently lower than the average for India as a whole and indicate a worsening trend during 1990s.

Literacy rate among rural women is 11.59 per cent, the lowest in the country. Although the female literacy rate has increased from 3 per cent in 1951 to 20 per cent in 1991, the gap in literacy rate between males and females has continued to widen in spite of all efforts even in the 1990s. The enrolment ratio of girls in primary education is adverse compared to boys. Even those who join primary education, a large number of them dropout. The girl is withdrawn by her parents from the school and are engaged in the domestic chores as her going to school is perceived as unnecessary and useless in the long run, and an expensive luxury for the rural household in its relentless struggle for survival.

Socio-Economic Status

In the last fifty years, Rajasthan has made significant progress in several areas like agricultural production, exploitation of mineral resources, development of means of transport and communication and energy generation. Concerted efforts have been made to improve quality of life and civic amenities, especially water management in rural areas. The average life span of the people has increased, maternal mortality and infant mortality rates have declined, canal irrigation has expanded and potable water is available to more people.

Agriculture is the primary economic activity in the state and engages 70 per cent of the population. Animal husbandry is the second major economic activity, especially in the arid and semi-arid regions. Agrarian communities traditionally view children as an economic asset. Thus, a large number of children are engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, mostly as unpaid labourers. A significantly large number of children also work in gem polishing, carpet making, tobacco processing and mining industries at less than minimum wages. Many children are also engaged as construction workers and in hotels, restaurants and petty shops. The situation in regard to their education is alarming.

Western Rajasthan being rain deficit area can offer fodder for livestock only during monsoon season. A seasonal migration pattern of cattle as well as human beings has evolved over the years. There are communities who are identified as migratory communities. They follow the same pattern of

migratory routes year after year to neighbouring states where enough pasture is available. Besides, agriculture being less stable due to uncertain rainfall, a large number of people migrate in search of employment. The large scale migration due to all these have severe adverse affect on the regularity and attendance in schools of children belonging to migratory families.

Many villages especially in the desert and tribal districts are not connected by approachable road as yet. About 30 per cent of the rural population live in hamlets, situated at a considerable distance from the main villages. No mode of transportation, not even a bicycle or a motorcycle, can be of any use as such villages/hamlets are not connected by any approachable road metalled or unmetalled. One has to walk a distance of 6 to 12 km., sometimes even more, to reach such villages.

Non-availability of perennial sources of water in parts of the state and the availability of ground water at considerable depth poses a serious problem for supply of safe drinking water. Ground water at many places is unfit for human consumption due to excessive fluoride contents. Consumption of such water has resulted in bodily deformity and illness among the inhabitants.

The power situation in Rajasthan is precarious. As per government statistics, 83.42 per cent of the villages of Rajasthan are electrified. However, the electrified villages also include those through which electric poles and wires are passed by. It does not necessarily ensure that houses of the same villages are electrified. This is evident from the fact that only 31 per cent of the population have access to electricity.

Rajasthan is poorly served by communication services. Number of telephones for every 1000 persons is only 5.33. Satellite communications link only some major urban centres. A large number of villages have no access to media like radio, TV and daily newspapers.

Status of EFA in Rajasthan

As one of the educationally under-developed states of the country, statistical indicators of educational progress in Rajasthan are not quite encouraging. However, the past 10-15 years has witnessed a number of special thrusts towards the goal of universal elementary education. A brief overview of the current status of basic education in the state is presented in this present section.

Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)

Integrated Child Development Scheme(ICDS) is the main channel of providing early childhood care and education in the state. ICDS is being implemented in the state since 1975 through centres called Anganwadi Centres(AWCs). AWCs are supposed to remain open for 3 to 4 hours a day and work for: (i) early childhood education, (ii) immunisation of children and pregnant mothers, (iii) nutrition, (iv) health check up, and (v) health education. As on 1998-99, 25,701 AWCs are operational. Altogether 1.411 million women including lactating mothers and pregnant women and 634,000 children are the

Table 2.1: Status of ECCE and Literacy in Rajasthan

Indicator	Rajasthan	India
Gross Enrolment Ratio in ECCE (1997)		
Boys	15.5	17.3
Girls	14.3	16.4
Total	14.9	16.9
Literacy Rate 7+ population		
1991 Census		
Male	54.99	64.13
Female	20.44	39.29
Total	38.55	52.21
53rd Round of NSSO (Jan-Dec.1997)		
Male	73.00	73.00
Female	35.00	50.00
Total	55.00	62.00
Literacy Rate 15+ population		
1991 Census		
Male	52.50	61.90
Female	16.90	34.10
Total	35.50	48.50
As reported by MHRD: 1997		
Male	69.00	70.00
Female	27.00	43.00
Total	49.00	57.00

Source: MHRD, GOI and NIEPA(1999) , EFA-2000 Assessment: Core EFA Indicators, Draft Report, MHRD, GOI (1998), Selected Educational Statistics 1997-98, Deptt. of Education.

beneficiaries of these AWCs.

It was originally envisaged that AWCs would invariably be attached with every primary school. However, as most of the primary schools have dilapidated buildings and insufficient space, many AWCs are actually located away from schools and timings of the AWCs do not match with the school timings. As a result, the linkage with the primary schools could not be established. This has resulted in dilution of its goal of working for pre-primary education of the children. Also, the crowding of children of less than 6 years old in primary schools has inflated the enrolment figures. Anganwadi workers have not been provided sufficient training for imparting pre-primary education. As a result, even though imparting education has been a main programme component under ICDS scheme, it could not attract focussed attention.

IICDS is being implemented by some NGOs. In addition, some NGOs are working for ECCD on a much smaller scale in the state. On the whole, there has not been much progress towards ECCD in Rajasthan. The gross enrolment ratio in ECCE is very low, generally in India, and is worse in case of Rajasthan (see Table 2.1).

Adult Literacy

The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was formed in may 1988 with the objective of imparting functional literacy to 100 million adult non-literates in the age-group of 15-35 years by 1999. Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) model was accepted as the principal strategy for eradication of illiteracy by almost all states and UTs. For once, an educational programme became a mass campaign which secured commitment and support of all political parties, many organisations and NGOs. Government of Rajasthan also launched TLC in 1989 under the NLM and over a period of time succeeded in securing co-operation of a large section of society. Overall impact in terms of securing active participation of a very large number of people has been more impressive than the achieved level of literacy.

The literacy rate in 15+ age-group population has increased from 35.50 per cent in 1991 to 49.00 per cent in 1997 recording an increase of about 14 per cent. The recorded improvement in Rajasthan indicate better performance than all India average. The literacy campaign has certainly brought about awareness among the people regarding the significance of education in development and empowerment, but the performance has mostly been overshadowed by generation of data on literacy rates rather than in developing indicators to capture the qualitative changes.

Primary Education

Government of Rajasthan has initiated a number of stimulating programmes and projects aiming at achieving the goals of UEE. Some of these are described in brief in the following.

Non-Formal Education (NFE) programme was started in 1975 in Rajasthan. The programme aims at bringing those children under the coverage of primary education who remain outside the purview of formal schools due to some reason or

the other. The timings are also expected to be adjusted as per the convenience of the children. Every centre and every child is provided teaching-learning materials. Attempts are made that children joining NFE centres complete five classes of primary education in two years' duration. Up to January 1999, 17,494 NFE centres are said to be operational. Approximately 480,000 children are enrolled in these centres. However, there had been reports of uneven quality of the NFE centres, it being said that a substantial proportion of them are in fact not running and the quality of education provided in these centres has also been a subject of criticism.

Saraswati Yojana (SY) is operational since 1994-95 for the education of the girl child. Under this scheme, local women who have passed class VIII are given training and financial assistance to run courtyard schools in their homes. At present, about 1220 SY centres are functional in which approximately 10,000 children are studying.

Guru-Mitra Yojana, also operational since 1994-95, is a scheme to improve the retention in schools through the input of child-centred and activity-based teaching-learning. The state government in collaboration with UNICEF is implementing this scheme in 6175 schools of 38 blocks belonging to 10 districts.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) has been initiated in the state recently for achieving the goals of UPE in 19 districts of Rajasthan. DPEP aims at decetralising planning for primary education at the level of the district. The Social Assessment Study, the Baseline Study and the Finance Study have already been conducted and district plan of 10 districts have already been approved. These 10 districts are being taken up for operationalisation in phase I of the project.

Rajiv Gandhi Swarn Jayanti Pathshala is the most recent endeavour of the state government to open up 16,000 primary schools in the current year. More than 12,000 para-teacher based schools have been opened under this scheme with effect from July 1, 1999.

Progress Towards Universal Elementary Education

Data from secondary sources indicate that there has been significant improvement in the overall status of elementary education during 1990s and that the performance of Rajasthan is better than average performance of the nation as a whole and also better than most of the states of India.

Access

The Sixth All India Educational Survey conducted by NCERT in 1993, identified 16,259 habitations without a primary school within a walking distance of 1 km.. Accordingly, 74.58 per cent of the habitations was served by a primary school (PS) within 1 km. and 64.43 per cent of the habitations was served by an upper primary school (UPS) within 3 kms. (see Table 2.2). After 1993, a number of formal schools and non-formal education centres including the Rajiv Gandhi Pathshalas

Table 2.2: Access to Primary Education

Indicator	Rajasthan	India
No. of habitations served by Primary Schools		
up to 1 km.	47711	884089
(% to total)	74.58	83.36
More than 1 Km.	16259	176523
(% to total)	25.42	16.64
No. of habitations served by Upper Primary Schools		
up to 3 km.	41219	807656
(% to total)	64.43	76.15
More than 3 Km.	22751	252956
(% to total)	35.57	23.85
No. of Population served by Primary Schools		
up to 1 km.	33130093	618543482
(% to total)	92.55	93.76
More than 1 Km.	2665588	41147566
(% to total)	7.45	6.24
No. of population served by Upper Primary Schools		
up to 3 km.	28278241	560769550
(% to total)	79.00	85.00
More than 3 Km.	7517440	98921498
(% to total)	21.00	15.00
Gross Enrolment Ratio (I –V)		
Boys	111.30	98.50
Girls	81.00	81.50
Total	97.00	90.30
Net Enrolment Ratio (I-V)		
Boys	78.50	71.00
Girls	31.80	48.80
Total	56.40	60.30

*Source: MHRD, GOI (1998), Selected educational Statistics 1997-98, Deptt. of Education
MHRD, GOI and NIEPA(1999) , EFA-2000 Assessment: Core EFA Indicators,
Draft Report, State Institute of Educational Research and Training (1998),
Sixth All India Educational Survey, State Report - Rajasthan, Udaipur.*

have been opened in the state.

As per the Annual Report (1998-99) of the Deptt. of Education of the state government, Rajasthan has 34,364 primary schools and 14,548 upper primary schools as on 1998-99, 7.38 million and 2.31 million children respectively are enrolled in these schools. The corresponding enrolment figures in 1991-92 were 4.59 million and 1.43 million. As per the Selected Educational Statistics

1997-98, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India, gross enrolment ratio (GER) in the state has increased from 67.6 per cent in 1990-91 to 96.9 per cent in 1997-98 in primary classes and from 49.2 per cent to 52.7 per cent in upper primary classes during the same period. Girls enrolment has recorded a faster growth compared to boys. This has resulted in a decline in the gap between boys and girls share in total enrolment. Further, the gross and net enrolment ratios (NER) for primary level (i.e. grades I-V) are higher in Rajasthan than all India average (see Table 2.2).

Efficiency

The survival rate to grade V, calculated from year-wise and grade-wise enrolment data compiled from government sources by the State Institute of Educational Research and Training, Udaipur, reveal that the survival rate of children in primary education in Rajasthan is about 16 percentage points less than all India average. But the improvement during 1990s has been better as compared to all India average and that retention of girls has improved relatively at a better rate than that of boys. (See Table 2.3).

It has been observed that a sizeable number of children continue to repeat the same classes thereby requiring more than 5 years for completion of 5 classes of primary education. The grade-wise repetition rates in Rajasthan are approximately half of the national average. The years input per graduate of primary education has been worked out to be 6.6 years for Rajasthan as against 7.5 years for India as a whole implying better efficiency of Rajasthan. The transition rate from highest grade

of primary education (i.e. grade V) to the lowest grade of upper primary (i.e. grade VI) is also much higher.

A Review of the Performance Indicators

Performance of Rajasthan as indicated by the data as discussed above has to be understood with certain degree of limitations. The main limitations are:

a. The reliability and appropriateness of the data;

b. The intra-state variations in performance which do not get reflected in the average of the state; and

c. The persistent drawback of some of the efforts made.

Reliability of Data

Enrolment Ratios

The reported GER and NER are based on enrolment data taken from secondary sources of information collected and compiled by government departments basically from the school registers. In the context of UPE in India, policy initiatives till the 1980s referred almost exclusively to universal enrolment. The pressures of Twenty Point Programme, eligibility to free food-grain and allocation of posts of teachers linked with enrolment etc. have all resulted in over-reporting of enrolment figure to a considerable extent. The PROBE(1999), on the basis of their primary survey, also brings out this fact. PROBE, in fact,

Table 2.3: Indicators of Efficiency

Indicator	Rajasthan	India
Net Attendance Ratio : 1996		
I – V	55	66
VI - VIII	35	43
Grade-wise Repetition Rates		
I	4.90	7.70
II	3.00	5.70
III	2.80	7.30
IV	2.20	5.80
V	3.50	5.90
Transition Rate from Primary to Upper Primary (From V to VI)		
Boys	95.32	78.57
Girls	80.1	70.39
Total	90.11	75.03
Rates of Efficiency		
Survival Rate to Grade V (1990-91)		
Boys	40.79	59.90
Girls	33.20	54.00
Total	38.44	57.40
Survival Rate to Grade V (1997-98)		
Boys	46.20	62.18
Girls	41.90	58.66
Total	44.65	60.42
Years Input per graduate		
Boys	6.2	7.2
Girls	7.5	8.0
Total	6.6	7.5
Status of Teaching Inputs		
Teacher-pupil Ratio (Primary Level)	51	48
Teacher-pupil Ratio (I- VIII)		
1991-92	40.48	50.17
1997-98	42.52	48.09
Percentage of trained teachers	97.6	87.7
Percentage of Female teachers	28.8	35.8

Source: MHRD, GOI (1998), Selected educational Statistics 1997-98, Deptt. of Education
MHRD, GOI and NIEPA(1999) , EFA-2000 Assessment: Core EFA Indicators, Draft Report
GOR, Annual Report 1998-99, Deptt. of Primary and Secondary Education
State Institute of Educational Research and Training (1998), Sixth All India
Educational Survey, State Report - Rajasthan, Udaipur.

designate the Gross Enrolment Ratio reported in the government sources as *'Gross Exaggeration Rate'* on the following counts:

- These include under-age enrolment especially in class I;

- These include nominal and fake enrolment of the children who are actually not motivated to attend school; and

- These include double enrolment of the children who are actually enrolled and regularly attending some unrecognised private schools as well.

Besides, the names of children who enroll but dropout before completing 5 classes of primary education continue to appear in the school register. Further, the reported GER and NER are calculated on the basis of the number of children in the relevant age-group as projected by the Planning Commission. These projections appear to be on the lower side. Population of India has touched a level of 990 million as against 960 million projected by Planning Commission for the year 1998. Thus, the GER and NER also get overestimated to that extent of underestimation of the relevant age-group population.

The PROBE report states that the teachers have several incentives for over-reporting of the enrolment figures. Some of these are: (i) if enrolment falls below a specific level, the teacher may be transferred; (ii) they may be under direct pressure to show progress in enrolment over time or 'universal enrolment' in the relevant age-group; (iii) parents may force the teacher for registering nominal enrolment for availing the benefit of incentives such as food for mid-day meals; (iv) private schools may approach the teachers of government schools for 'double enrolment' under a mutually advantageous arrangement.

As per the data reported in PROBE, the NER of boys and girls in primary education work out to be 85.43 per cent and 56.23 per cent respectively. The data generated from house to house survey by Lok Jumbish project through an alternative system and as a part of school-mapping in the villages in which it has been working reveal much lower NER - 63.46 per cent for boys and 25.29 per cent for girls, before any intervention was made.

Even if the reported data are accepted as representative, the reported GER as an indicator of universal enrolment in Rajasthan does not reflect the actual status of enrolment. This is evident from the fact that the reported differential between GER and NER is much higher in Rajasthan as compared to all India average implying that large number of overage/underage children are enrolled. Corresponding to this, the net attendance ratio (NAR) in Rajasthan is less than all India average. (See Table 2.3). This indicates that many of the enrolled children are actually not attending regularly and therefore, even if the reported GER is high, it does not necessarily imply better performance of Rajasthan in real sense.

Table 2.4: Enrolment Rates from Various Data Sources: Rajasthan

	Boys	Girls	Total
Annual Report, MHRD, GOI, 1992-93			
Age Group 6-11	119.5	60.9	91.0
Age Group 11-14	76.8	28.9	53.9
Age Group 6-14			
Sixth All India Educational Survey, NCERT, 1993			
Age Group 6-11	95.1	53.5	75.4
Age Group 11-14	61.9	24.2	44.3
Age Group 6-14	83.7	43.7	64.8
HDI Survey of NCAER, 1993			
Age Group 6-14	78.0	41.9	61.3
National Family Health Survey, 1992-93			
(Enrolled and Attending School)			
Age Group 6-10	72.4	42.4	58.5
Age Group 11-14	77.2	37.7	59.3
Age Group 6-14	74.3	40.6	58.8

Other than the problem of over-reporting of enrolment figures in secondary sources, another very important problem arises from the inconsistency of data reported in various secondary sources (See Table 2.4). This gives rise to a serious confusion regarding the actual enrolment status and the question arises as to which source of information is to be relied upon to assess the more accurate situation.

Retention Rates

The reported survival rate to grade V very often also referred as the retention rates which are calculated by working out the proportion of children enrolled in class V in any specific year to the number of children enrolled in class I four years

ago. This does not give a reliable estimation basically due to two reasons:

- This way of calculation does not take into account the repeaters who might have been retained in the system but are repeating the lower classes more than once.

- The enrolment figure in class I is erroneous and is more than the actual enrolment. Compared to this, enrolment figure of class V is not fake and is relatively very small. Thus, the retention rate calculated from these 2 figures gives an underestimation.

The actual data relating to retention and dropout have simply not been generated systematically,

either in Rajasthan or in India as a whole.

However, based on the primary survey under a study conducted by Lok Jumbish(1998), it was found that 14.9 per cent of the enrolled children in grades I-V were repeaters in the same class during the previous year and the percentage of repeaters was highest in grade-I. To be precise, 30.04 per cent of the children were found to be repeating grade-I. Data of formal schools belonging to the 5 development blocks, in which Lok Jumbish project has been operationalised right from the beginning, indicate a still higher repetition rate in grade I (42.28 per cent) as the transition rate from class I to class II during the pre-intervention period was found to be 57.88 per cent.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

The pupil-teacher ratio of Rajasthan has been worked out to be slightly worse than all India average for primary section in 1997-98 and the percentage of trained teacher is about 97.6 per cent in Rajasthan as against 87.7 per cent for India as a whole. However, pupil-teacher ratio should ideally not be calculated separately for primary level as there are primary sections in UPS and teachers of UPS teach primary classes as well. Calculated for the elementary level, pupil-teacher ratio for Rajasthan works out to be better than the national average in 1997-98 (see Table 2.3).

Intra-state Variation in Performance

The average rates and ratios calculated for a state do not reveal the intra-state variations. Given the diverse circumstances in Rajasthan as already discussed, even if the state average indicate better performance during 1990s, it is only a half-truth. There still remains many areas and disadvantaged groups which needs greater attention. On the other hand, performance in some areas have been relatively better than the state average giving rise to the inequality in educational development among different regions/districts within the state. There are, in fact, wide variations across districts (Refer Technical Note on Concentration Ratio in the Appendix).

Persistent Drawbacks in the Efforts Made

Making Provision for Universal Access

As regards making provision for universal access, the state government has the norm of opening up of a formal primary school in such revenue villages having a population of more than 250 (150 in desert and tribal areas). The Sixth All India Educational Survey defines habitation as " ... a distinct cluster of houses existing in a compact and contiguous manner with a local name and its population should not be less than 25 in plain areas and not less than 10 in hilly or sparsely populated areas." The survey data do not separately report the number of such habitations having a population of more than 250 but do not have a primary schooling facility available. Rather it reports number of school-less habitations with more than or less than a population of 300. An estimate based on these data, an estimated number of additional habitations which might have come into existence since 1993 in Rajasthan and the number of schools opened since then, indicated the following status by the end of 1998:

- there were 1932 habitations with more than 300 population but not having a primary schooling facility

- there were 6582 habitations in the population range of 200-300 not having a primary schooling facility; and

- there were 3857 habitations in the population range of 100-200 without a primary school.

- There were approximately 7500 habitations having a population of less than 100 and without any primary educational facility.

Given this situation, a full fledged formal school could have been opened in the first category of habitations, a para-teacher based school in the habitations of the second category and other alternative schools like Non-formal centres in the third category of habitations. Arrangement for camp mode of education or hostel facilities or proper transportation for going to and coming back from schools for the children belonging to the fourth category of habitations could have been planned for. Instead, para-teacher based schools, called Rajiv Gandhi Swarn Jayanti Pathshalas, of uniform pattern have been opened. The following points are worth noting in this context:

- Reportedly, many of the Rajiv Gandhi Swarn Jayanti Pathshalas have been opened in such localities/habitations which already have either formal or non-formal primary educational facilities. Even if it is assumed that all these schools have been opened only in school-less habitations, these do not ensure universal

access. Because, experience reveals that demand for universal access fall short of supply if the problems, arising out of irregularity of teachers, dysfunctionality of schools, unattractive methods of teaching, irrelevance of curriculum etc. making school unattractive to the children and their parents, are not taken care of simultaneously.

- The 42nd Round of National Sample Survey (July 1986 - June 1987) found that 'non-availability of schooling facilities' accounted for only about 10 per cent of the 'never-enrolled' in rural India and 8 per cent in urban India. As against this, 'disinterest' has been quoted by largest number accounting for 30 per cent of those surveyed as the reason for their non-enrolment in school. A study based on primary survey of 300 children belonging to remote and disadvantageous areas from rural Rajasthan conducted by Lok Jumbish(1998) also found that the principal reason for low/no enrolment in primary education is that the children are engaged in the family economic activities and/or look after their younger brothers and sisters and are engaged in household work. Their parents are not in a position to sacrifice the opportunity cost of sending them to school in terms of time and energy for acquiring no education or irrelevant kind of education as are imparted in the school.

Besides, upper primary education is not available to a large number of children, and girls in particular find it impossible to go to another village to continue their education of upper primary classes. Nearly one-fourth of the children are also working

children who cannot benefit from school system. Patriarchal attitudes come in the way of girls' education.

Making Sufficient Fund Available for Elementary Education

The expenditure on education in Rajasthan has been increased from Rs.8050 million in 1990-91 to Rs.22013 million in 1997-98. The corresponding share of educational expenditure in Net State Domestic Product has increased from 4.40 per cent to 4.75 per cent during the same

1997-98 is only 1.96 times more than the per child expenditure in 1990-91 as against the total expenditure on elementary education in 1997-98 being 2.8 times more than in 1990-91. This implies that increase in expenditure has not kept pace with the growing number of children participating in elementary education. Besides, 97 per cent of this expenditure goes only to teachers' salaries. If increased expenditure is intended to upgrade the quality, and benefit expected to reach individual children, per child expenditure has to be increased thereby implying the need for total investment to be still higher.

Table 2.5: Financing of Elementary Education in Rajasthan

Indicator	1990-91	1997-98
Expenditure on Education		
(in Rs. 00,000's)		
Total	80496.69	220131.15
Elementary Education	44782.69	125730.72
Exp. On El.Edn. As % to total Edn. Budget	55.63	57.12
Per capita Income in Rs. (at current prices)	4191	9215
Per child expenditure on Elementary education	721.37	1414.61

Source: GOR, Annual Report, Deptt. of Primary and Secondary Education,

GOI, Economic Survey, 1998-99, Ministry of Finance, Economic Division

period. More than 55 per cent of this total allocation of resources for education goes to elementary education. Expenditure on elementary education in Rajasthan has been increased from Rs.4478 million in 1990-91 to Rs.12573 million in 1997-98. (See Table 2.5). But, such increase in expenditure does not necessarily imply optimum resource allocation to elementary education by the state government. The per child expenditure in

Given the fund available to the state government, there appears to be scope for increasing the allocation of funds for elementary education. Out of the per capita Net Domestic Product of Rajasthan, the proportion of per child expenditure on elementary education has declined from 17.21 per cent in 1990-91 to 15.35 per cent in 1997-98, indicating that the

increase in expenditure on elementary education has been less than proportionate to the increase in income thereby implying that even the available fund has not been optimally allocated.

Building Up an Appropriate Database for Planning

It has been recognised since long that planning has to be based on appropriate information base. But hardly any effort has been made to built up a more reliable, authentic and relevant information base. Most of the data refers to supply side indicators. For example, data have been generated regarding number of schools per 1000 population to indicate the status of accessibility. Data also show the number of children enrolled in the schools, but no data have been generated to show the number of children actually availing the facilities in the schools. Similarly, there are data showing pupil-teacher ratio, but no data indicate to what extent a student avails the teaching input.

To add to the list of inadequacies of data, is the information regarding learning achievement and the indicator to reflect the impact of learning. Until recently, quality indicators of education used to be the teacher-pupil ratio, the pass ratio, availability of physical facilities in the school etc. Important indicators of quality, viz., relevance of the curriculum, the teaching method and the medium of instruction used in the school, which are not easily quantifiable, have been left out from any kind of measurement.

Since the adoption of New Education Policy of 1986 and after the Jomtien Conference of 1990, measurement of learning levels as an indicator of quality is being given importance. But there has not been a systematic attempt to study the learning achievement except some studies, which have been undertaken here and there. For example, a study by Shukla and others (1991) indicated that learning achievement of children in both languages and mathematics in Rajasthan is better than all-India average by about 6 per cent. The Base Line Achievement study conducted by State Institute of Educational Research and Training (1997) to study the pre-implementation status of DPEP in the ten districts of Rajasthan found the achievement score of children in language and mathematics to be 54.94 per cent and 35.03 per cent respectively. This study noted that mean achievement of students actually varies across the districts and at different grades/classes. As against these, the benchmark study conducted in 15 blocks to study the pre-implementation status of Lok Jumbish project indicated much lower achievement levels, the average achievement scores of children in grades I and II in both language and mathematics varied from 34.30 per cent to 37.50 per cent.

Innovative Strategies for UEE in Rajasthan

Relatively poor status of UEE in Rajasthan as well as the various problems associated with the traditional planning approaches discussed in the previous section strongly suggest the need for adopting innovative strategies to achieve any breakthrough. This is even more applicable for a state like Rajasthan where the living conditions are particularly adverse in villages due to severe shortage of drinking water, food and fodder and basic amenities. Following the national drive of opening up of school within a walking distance of 1 to 3 km. from the place of residence of the children, primary schools have been opened in most of the revenue villages of Rajasthan. Small school buildings have been constructed and one/two qualified teachers appointed. As education is still a remote dream for such villagers, qualified teachers appointed by the government belong mostly to the nearby urban/semi-urban areas. Once appointed, these teachers find it extremely difficult either to stay in the village or commute daily in the absence of any mode of conveyance. Obviously, they can not be regular, teaching children remains lowest on their priority of tasks, not to speak of giving attention to the learning environment and maintenance of available facilities in the schools. No supervisor appointed by the government reach there for monitoring. The teachers remain absent frequently and use all their energy in managing to get a transfer to a city or a town. In schools, located at a relatively advantageous location, which are connected by very poor public mode of transportation, the teachers regularly arrive late and leave early just to adjust with the timings of the rarely available mode of transportation. The so called 'schools' provided by the government at an accessible physical distance thus remained inaccessible and rendered dysfunctional in no time.

Combating this situation demands moving out of the conventional approaches of planning and management. The new planning approach has to be pluralistic, process-based, non-homogeneous and based on the authentic needs as perceived by the community. This can not be through a centralised and controlled approach. Rather, a decentralised system, permitting for autonomy and involvement of the community, NGOs and the people associated with the existing system becomes indispensable. The role of the government in such system is that of a facilitator to extend appropriate support rather than a controller of the system and the resources. Such planning approach has been accepted on principle by the educational planners of India but untill recently it could not be translated into action. What, therefore, appears important is to develop appropriate and contextual techniques and processes for implementation of such planning approach.

Rajasthan has a number of established NGOs which have been working on integrated programmes for development of the entire

communities. During mid-1980s, the state government extended the provisions for working in co-operation with NGOs. This resulted in a spurt of NGOs supported by relatively large funds made available from the government. A number of international donor agencies also entered the state to fund the NGO sector. The areas of activities which have witnessed growing voluntary participation in the past few decades include the basic and adult education through popular participation. Some NGOs have been working for NFE at smaller scale based on innovative strategies.

The rural community of Rajasthan is largely aware of the importance of education and feel the need for it. However, they feel powerless to intervene in the system with corrective measures. Consequent to the false promises made to them over years about various development schemes by a non-accountable government system, the villagers have developed some sort of cynicism towards development.

Keeping the above context in view, an attempt is made in this section to describe two projects involving a number of innovative strategies, namely, Shiksha Karmi Project and Lok Jumbish Project, that have been under implementation in Rajasthan during the last decade with fair amount of success. These projects were designed with a view to address the critical problems of existing system and to develop workable solutions through people's participation and collaboration with the existing NGOs.

Shiksha Karmi Project

Genesis of the Project

Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP) is a bold and ambitious innovation to transform dysfunctional schools into reasonably efficiently run schools. It makes provision for quality education with the help of locally available youth albeit with lower qualifications.

Shiksha Karmi project is rooted in the work of Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC), an NGO in Rajasthan. In 1974, SWRC started a few night schools for out of school children of 6-14 years age-group who tended cattle or worked on farms. Local youth with elementary education were engaged as teachers. The teachers, given a free hand to enthuse the children towards education, used their community's amazing repertoire of folk songs and stories. This method of teaching was so successful that SWRC decided to design an appropriate curriculum in these lines and possibily intervene in the regular schools. Three dysfunctional government primary schools were taken up with the aim of offering more meaningful content and methods of teaching. This experiment was supported by Centre for Educational Technology of NCERT. At the end of three years, an evaluation of the children showed that their achievements were comparable with those of children in other local schools.

In 1984, a fresh project was formulated on the basis of this experience and 13 remote villages were taken up to test this model of government-NGO collaboration in energising an educational system.

The term 'Shiksha Karmi' was coined at that time. SWRC selected the Shiksha Karmis in consultation with the local government and village elders. Those selected for the post were given a month's residential training by drawing resource persons from SWRC, State Institute of Educational Research & Training(SIERT) and also educationists from outside these institutions. The syllabus and teaching materials were prepared by the group of trainers and co-ordinated by Sandhan, a Resource Institution specialising in curriculum and teachers' training. The Shiksha Karmis began teaching in March 1984.

Consistent with the national goals laid down for primary education in the National Policy on Education 1986 and its Programme of Action, Shiksha Karmi project (SKP) was launched in 1987 as a joint venture between the governments of India and Sweden. With the launching of the SKP, it was necessary to have an implementing structure which could at one level be insulated from the government style of decision making and at another level was owned by the government which could give it the power and legitimacy to intervene in the delivery system. Thus, the Rajasthan Shiksha Karmi Board (SKB) was set up as a registered autonomous society in October 1987 to administer the project planning, implementation, co-ordination and management.

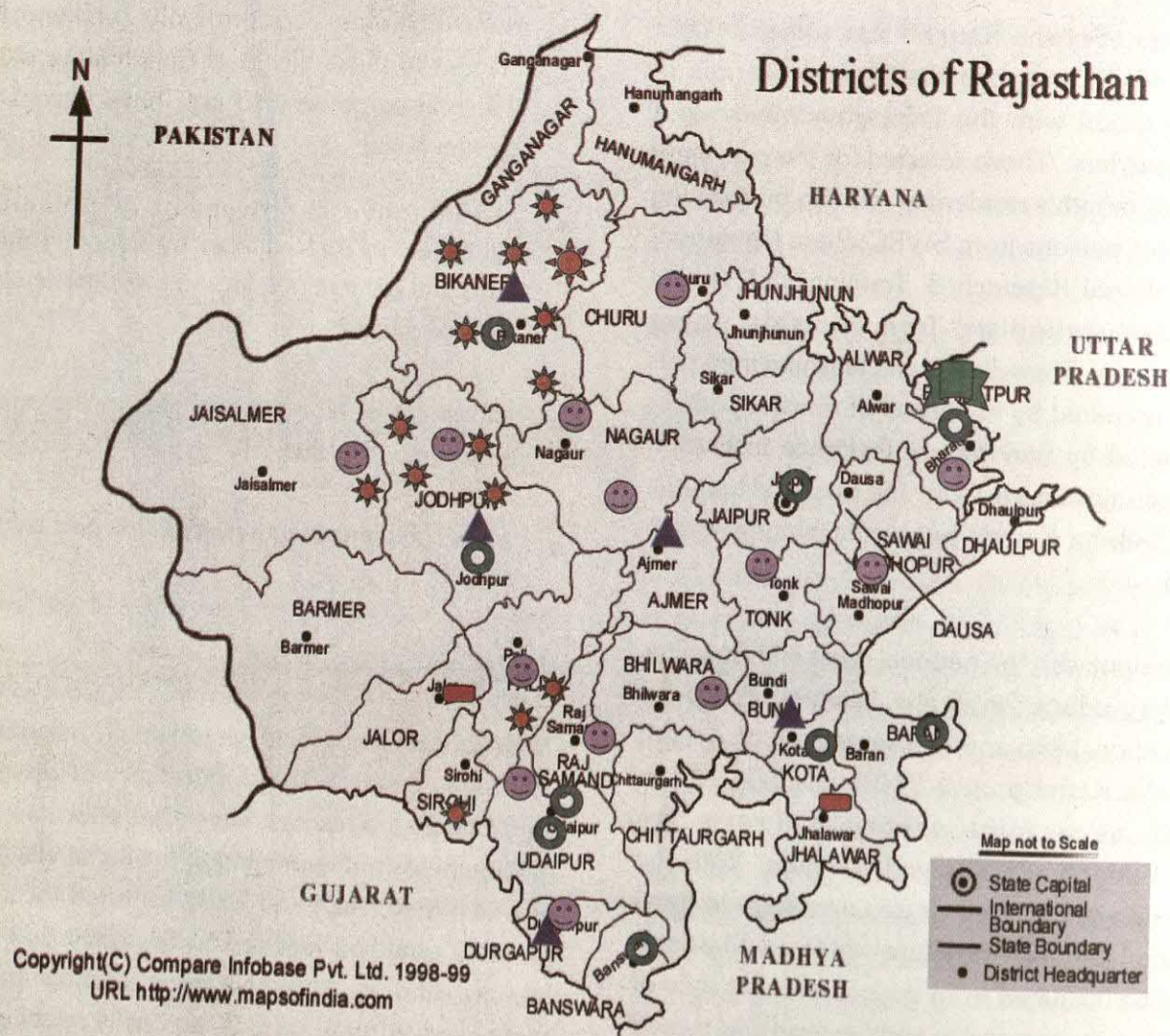The basic objectives of SKP were to achieve:

- universalisation of primary education in

remote, socio-economically backward villages in those blocks of Rajasthan where the existing primary schools have become dysfunctional;

- a qualitative improvement of primary education in such villages by adapting the form and content of education to local needs and conditions;

- enrolment of all boys and girls in the age-group of 6-14 years;

- a level of learning equivalent to the norms for class V.

Shiksha Karmi: The Concept

'Shiksha Karmi' is a Hindi word literally meaning 'Education Worker'. These education workers are the full time para-teachers with lesser educational qualifications but belonging to the same village in which they teach and are substituted for the formally qualified teachers in the government primary schools. Shiksha Karmis are motivated to render voluntary services against a relatively lower payment than the qualified teachers appointed by the government. The concept of Shiksha Karmi is based on the premise that a change agent specially in the field of education can work effectively if he/she belongs to the same locality. More weightage is, therefore, given to his/her willingness and ability to function as a social worker rather than to only educational qualifications. The expected qualities and duties of Shiksha Karmis as described by Anandalakshmy and Jain (1997) is worth quoting:

Districts of Rajasthan

PAKISTAN

Ganganagar
Hanumangarh
HARYANA
GANGANAGAR
HANUMANGARH
BIKANER
CHURU
Churu
JHUNJHUNUN
Jhunjhunun
UTTAR PRADESH
Bikaner
Sikar
SIKAR
ALWAR
Alwar
BHARATPUR
JAISALMER
NAGAUR
Nagaur
Dausa
Dhaulpur
Jaisalmer
JODHPUR
Jaipur
JAIPUR
Dausa
DHAULPUR
SAWAI MADHOPUR
Jodhpur
Ajmer
AJMER
Tonk
Sawai Madhopur
DAUSA
BARMER
Barmer
TONK
Pali
PALI
BHILWARA
Bundi
Jalor
Bhilwara
BUNDI
Raj Samar
RAJ SAMAND
Kota
Baran
BARAN
Sirohi
Chittaurgarh
KOTA
JALOR
SIROHI
Udaipur
CHITTAURGARH
Jhalawar
UDAIPUR
JHALAWAR
GUJARAT
MADHYA PRADESH
Dungarpur
DURGAPUR
Banswara
BANSWARA

Map not to Scale

- ◉ State Capital
- International Boundary
- State Boundary
- • District Headquarter

▭	Mahila shikshan Vihar established by Lok Jumbish at Jalor and Jhalawar
▲	Offices of Area Coordinators of Lok Jumbish at Bikaner, Ajmer, Kota, Jodhpur and Dungarpur
☺	Mahila Prashikshan Kendras established by Shiksha Karmi Project
◎	Nine Regional Units under Shiksha Karmi Project
✹	Balika Shikshan Shivir organised by Lok Jumbish
⬡	Urdu Education introduced by Lok Jumbish in 80 schools of Kaman block

" Shiksha Karmis have to have a sense of belonging to their village, to care about children there and to teach them basics of literacy and numeracy. They must help children to be aware of the immediate world around them and the invisible world beyond. They have to be held accountable to the families who send their children to be educated, and to the community which provides the psychological support in such an enterprise. The SKs have to value knowledge and to recognise its value in use, and commit themselves to being continuing learners of both content and communication. Working as a team, cooperatively, is essential;"

To inculcate such qualities and values, SKs have to undergo rigorous induction training to begin with. This is followed by regular training aiming at upgradation of their teaching skills at specific intervals. Motivation of SKs are also sustained through such training and special incentives.

Operationalisation of a School by SKB

The field implementation of SKP starts with identification of remote and backward villages where primary schools opened by the government are not functioning. The next step is to hold a meeting of local self-government officials and the Block Development Officer of the government of Rajasthan. This is followed by a Gram-Sabha (an assembly of all adults in the village). The dysfunctional schools are listed out and a resolution of the local self government body is forwarded to SKB to take over the identified dysfunctional

schools. A team consisting of the representatives of SKB, local self-government bodies, state government and a woman representative visit the problematic schools and verifies its dysfunctionality on the basis of following criteria:

- extremely low enrolment

- low attendance of children

- low retention of boys and girls

- low academic attainment among children

- pattern of irregular attendance and absenteeism of teacher resulting in frequent closure of school

If on the basis of these criteria, the team finds that the school is dysfunctional, it proceeds to discuss the problems of school with the villagers. If the villagers are found to be willing to extend support for improvement of the school, a decision is taken to take over the school by SKB and the school made functional through selecting and appointing two SKs.

Selection and Training of SKs

The lifeline of the SKP is the selection, education and training of the SKs. The minimum qualification of SKs are specified at grade VIII for male and grade V for female candidates. The eligibility age are specified at 18-33 years. After the decision to take up a dysfunctional school is taken, a village assembly of all adults is held. Two persons, with the specified qualification and age, who are accepted by all villagers, are selected. The selected candidates are required to take tests in

writing and oral skills in Hindi (language), handwriting, knowledge of numbers and basic teaching-learning processes, awareness of hygiene and environment. The selection team for this test consists of representatives from Shiksha Karmi Board, a local NGO, the Pradhan (the elected representative of the local self-government), the Block Development Officer of the Govt. of Rajasthan and a woman representative of the village.

Human development aspect includes building up of confidence and self-esteem, inculcating a commitment to become a continuing learner of both content and communication, developing a feeling of equality with the trainers thereby giving a feeling of 'doing together' and in a team spirit, generating an willingness to be held accountable to the community especially the parents and families of the children and a sense of valuing knowledge and recognising the value of knowledge in use.

Once these aspects are successfully transacted, SKs become ready and receptive for the second aspect. *Developing teaching abilities* among SKs imply building up their capacity to cope up with the curriculum and content of textbooks and effective transaction in the classroom, use of methods that are self-referential, i.e., to talk about something as to how it is done, SKs are trained to do it themselves in that way, to handle multi-grade and multi-level teaching, to develop appropriate teaching-learning materials with the locally available materials, to teach and behave with girls with special care and retain them in school till they complete primary level of education.

Induction Training

Induction training of SKs is for 41 days. The emphasis during induction training is on pragmatic issues and repeated practice of difficult concepts. In addition to theoretical training, each SK is required to teach in a SK school for 10 days under the guidance of experienced teachers. The training is module-based with flexibility for review-based inputs to make it more effective. The daily performance of each SK is reviewed in a meeting of a Core Group of trainers, weaknesses identified and a plan made for remedying these on the next day. A close watch is kept on the conduct and performance of trainees and their capacity to improve in areas of weaknesses identified by trainers who are trained professionals from the government and outside.

At the end of the training course, trainees are given a written test in content and pedagogy. On the basis of the performance on the written test and continuous participatory and group-based evaluation of trainees over a period of 41 days, a candidate is declared either eligible or ineligible to become a SK.

On-the-job Training

Even after appointment as SKs, effort to improve their capability is sustained through recurrent and rigorous training throughout their career. Vacations are used for conducting training courses thereby ensuring that no teaching days is lost.

The induction training of 41 days equip the SKs to cope with teaching of grades I and II. During the subsequent 3 years, a residential training camp of 30 days each year is organised to train the SKs regarding the teaching of classes III, IV and V respectively. If some of them are not found to have achieved the desired level are given remedial training for 20 days. This series of training is followed by 20-day refresher and quality upgradation courses in the subsequent years. Thus, during a span of 8 years, a SK receive about 350-400 days of individualised and group training. Flexibility and innovation combined with professional rigour and co-operative learning may be said to be the hallmarks of SK training.

The trainers associated with such training have to have an activist orientation, an innovative approach and a strong sense of conviction. They have to value subject knowledge, pedagogic skills and efficient management in the trainees, without devaluing the person who might not have achieved them.

Gender Issues in SKP

SK schools were able to attract a very limited number of girls to the school initially because there were few women SKs. There is a shortage of village women with required education and self-confidence to become a SK. Mahila Prashikshan Kendras (MPKs), i.e., Women Training Institutes, were, therefore, set up with women trainers where young women take basic education required for becoming a SK. The trainees stay in the MPK for 6 months to 2 years depending on their original education and the progress they make. Most of these women are mothers of young children. To facilitate their studies and training, a creche and child care unit with a woman helper, is attached with every MPK. As of now, 14 MPKs spread over 13 districts (Refer map) are functioning and till now 345 women have been trained successfully in these centres to become SKs.

Many children in Rajasthan, especially girls, cannot attend schools as they take care of younger siblings or social customs do not allow them to attend schools. Mahila Sahyogis (Female Escorts) who are local women are appointed to collect children from their homes, escort them to schools and take care of young siblings during the school hours. Experience reveals that appointing female escorts has proved to be a major breakthrough in enabling girls to attend SK schools.

Management of SKP

SKB is guided by a Governing Council chaired by Education Minister of Rajasthan. The Governing Council meets annually to review progress, approve the Annual Report and Audited Accounts and provide policy guidelines. An Executive Council chaired by Education Secretary of the GOR meets quarterly to take management and funding decisions including new initiatives and innovations, support to NGOs, expenditure reviews etc. The Board also has to monitor the delicate balance between government funding and NGO participation. Sandhan - a professional NGO with social action and research as its main agenda and the Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur, an autonomous research body extend support in terms of expertise in content and

method. The Panchayat Raj representatives, several block and district level grass roots organisations and the village communities all extended support to the project functioning.

SKB is headed by a Secretary who is assisted by a group of academic, administrative and research staff. With the enhanced coverage of the project, decentralisation of management has been attempted by establishment of 9 Regional Resource Units (Refer map). Each unit has the responsibility of a cluster of blocks and is provided with 3-5 specialists and necessary supporting staff. At the block level, the Block Development Officer of the government plays a significant role in the management and administration of SKP. Funds for honorarium, Teaching-learning materials, equipment etc. are allotted to him. He utilises the budget, appoints SKs, and supervises their work.

At the level of the village, the Village Education Committee(VEC) is constituted with membership of about 11-15 men and women from the village. The VECs provide continuous support to the SK schools/pathshalas. Community members, through the encouragement of VECs contribute money, time, land, raw materials and labour for various activities associated with SK schools. VEC also contact parents for increased enrolment and retention, supervise the working of the centre and arrange for the physical facilities.

Evolution of New Programmes

With the expansion of Shiksha Karmi Project, changes have evolved in its functioning and implementation strategies. Some of these changes are as follows:

1. Initially, SKP did not envisage opening of new SK schools. During phase I, it was observed that there was a demand and need for opening of new schools in habitations where there was no facility for primary education due to geographical or social barriers to access. The opening of new school is based on the following criteria:

    a. population of the village;

    b. Number of out of school children in 6-14 years age-group;

    c. primary schools situated within a radius of 2 kms.;

    d. preparation of a village map indicating educational status;

    e. the availability of educated local youth for selection as SKs;

    f. Willingness of villagers to provide land for establishment of a new school and to make temporary accommodation available until a school building is constructed by the government.

Of late, the government has been disallowing taking up of the dysfunctional government schools by SKP. Instead, only new schools were opened during the past 3 years and operationalised under Shiksha Karmi project.

2. On the basis of the review of the project in 1991, the Prahar Pathshalas (schools of convenient timings) have been started to reach children who are unable to attend day school. The Prahar Pathshalas run for 2 hours every evening. The same SKs who run the day school run the Prahar Pathshalas as well. The two teachers may teach a single group together or run two groups individually depending on the needs of the children in that area. The Prahar Pathshalas are run either in the same building used for the day school or in another convenient place in the village. One centre is expected to cater to 25 learners in the age-group of 6-14 years. The admission into Prahar Pathshalas is open throughout the year. Decisions regarding place and timings are taken in consultation with the parents and the community members. The pace of learning, curriculum and textbooks are adjusted to the specific needs of learners. Prahar Pathshalas are seen as a stepping stone for transfer of children to day school.

To attract more girls to the school, the concept of Aangan Pathshalas - meaning 'courtyard schools' was introduced in 1992-93. A rural woman, who has passed class V and is willing to teach girls, is engaged to teach a group of at least 15 girls in the age-group of 6-14 years in her neighbourhood. She is given training and academic support. Recent studies have shown that Aangan Pathshalas are proving to be an effective contextual intervention to encourage sustained participation of girls in primary education. Aangan Pathshalas are usually started in villages where there are no formal schools or other facilities for the education of children.

4. In order to provide continuous back up support, 12-15 SK schools are grouped together in a unit which is supervised and co-ordinated by a supervisor called 'Shiksa Karmi Sahyogi' - literally meaning 'coadjutor to educational worker'. Every Shiksha Karmi Sahyogi is provided with a motorcycle to enable him to visit the schools regularly. He observes the teaching methods adopted in the class room, identifies strengths and weaknesses, gives practical demonstration of how to remedy weaknesses and makes SKs practice accordingly in his presence. A one day review meeting of Shiksha Karmi Sahyogis is held every month at the headquarters of the nine Regional Resource Units. Special attention is paid to issues raised by SKs as well as innovations and experiments initiated by them to achieve UPE.

Coverage and Achievement of SKP

The SKP has completed two phases:

Phase I: October 1987 to June 1994
Phase II: July 1994 to June 1998.

As of now, coverage of SKP extend to 2,697 villages with a population of 761,000. The project has engaged and trained 6,285 SKs who are providing primary education to 216,084 children in 2,697 day schools and 4,335 Prahar Pathshalas. 14 MPKs have successfully trained 345 women

to become SKs. Each village has been able to constitute a VEC. 28 NGOs and Voluntary agencies are working with Shiksha Karmi Board as partners in various aspects of the programme.

Evaluations and studies have indicated marked achievement of the project.

- 83 per cent of the children in the age-group of 6-14 years in SKP villages have been enrolled. 70 per cent of these enrolled children are first generation learners.

- 78 per cent girls in the age group are enrolled in day schools and Prahar Pathshalas taken together.

- In 25 per cent of the SKP villages, there has been universal enrolment (with cent per cent enrolment ratio).

- 67 per cent of the children studying in Shiksha Karmi schools belong to disadvantaged population groups.

- Average attendance in Shiksha Karmi schools is as high as 85 per cent.

- Retention in Shiksha Karmi schools is 65 per cent now as against 19 per cent when the dysfunctional schools were taken up.

- Gender gap in enrolment has reduced.

The SKP has proved that quality education for unpriviledged children is feasible through Shiksha Karmis and establishing a strong support system It offers a successful model of para-teacher. This concept of para teacher has been adopted and adapted in many states of India.

Finance and Cost

Phase I of SKP was jointly funded by Sida (Swedish International Development Authority) and GOR (Govt. of Rajasthan) in the ratio of 90:10. This phase involved a total investment of Rs.213.69 million. During Phase II, the share of funding from GOR has been increased and the present sharing between the two partners is in the ratio of 50:50. Phase II involved an investment of Rs. 489.00 million. Phase III (1999-2003) proposes to extend the coverage to 4,100 villages and 324,345 children at a cost of Rs. 2167.84 million. The proposed funding pattern during phase III will be in the same ratio of 50:50 to be provided by the state government and the foreign agency. However, after the nuclear test conducted by India, Sweden has decided to withdraw the financial aid to social sectors projects in India. The Dfid has been approached and they have agreed to share the finding in the same ratio as Sida was bearing.

The SKB prepares an annual indicative budget based on the overall financial plan and the existing status of implementation. The annual budget is further broken down per block, using the existing number of SKs and information from the field regarding the number of schools which will be required to be opened. The funds for the block are kept in GOR account at the Block Development office. SKB supervises the cash flow in each account. The accounts of SKB are audited yearly by a chartered accountant and the Accountant General of GOI.

Shiksha Karmi is considered to be a cost-effective project. Per child cost under SKP is Rs.1065 per

annum as against Rs.2170 per annum in the government schools (Thakur and Methi,1999). Of this, the project spends 25 per cent on items like training, teaching-learning materials. In the government system this constitutes only about 4 per cent of the total expenditutre.

Lok Jumbish Project

Lok Jumbish (LJ) is a bold attempt to develop and implement a new decentralised planning approach for universalisation of quality primary education which conforms to the aspirations of the community. LJ process of planning and management is based on authentic grassroots level information, community participation, government-NGO collaboration and gender equity.

Lok Jumbish Project was started in June 1992 to achieve the goals of EFA with special emphasis on Universalisation of Primary Education in Rajasthan.'Lok' is a Hindi word meaning 'people' and 'Jumbish' a Urdu word meaning 'movement'. Together they convey the idea of people's movement as well as a movement for the people. LJ has attempted to make education a people's movement ensuring active and sustained participation of people at every level. It is believed that creation of a people's movement would generate a stimulus for human development which, in turn, would contribute to a basic socio-economic transformation.

This has been attempted to be achieved through an array of sub-programmes aiming at systematic intervention in the community as well as in the existing system of primary education. The special emphasis of LJ is on education of girls and children belonging to the disadvantaged sections. The long term goals are

- Providing access to primary education to all children between 5 and 14 years of age.

- Ensuring that all enrolled children regularly attend school or non-formal centres and complete primary education;

- Ensuring that quality of education is improved by emphasising active learning, child-centred processes and achievement by all children at least of minimum levels of learning;

- Making modifications in the content and process of education to better relate it to the environment, to people's culture and to their living and working conditions; and

- Involving people in the planning and management of education.

- Creating structures and setting in motion processes that would empower women and make education an instrument of women's equality;

- Pursuing the goal of equity in education - between boys and girls, between socially or educationally disadvantaged section and the rest of the society and between children with disability and others;

Lok Jumbish Process of Working

The unit of decentralised planning in LJ is the village and the unit of decentralised management is the block. In-between the village and the block, there is a crucial structure of LJ called cluster which is formed by clubbing together 25 to 35 villages with similar geographical and socio-economic conditions. LJ takes up blocks for operationalisation following a notification by the state government.

Each development block is divided into 5 to 7 (sometimes more) compact clusters. A Block Steering Group (BSG) of 5 persons is appointed at the block level and a team of 4 persons at the cluster level. The role of the cluster personnel is to translate the ideas of LJ into action in villages. They are responsible for penetrating the rural areas, earn the confidence of the village community, provide necessary support as facilitators through active participation in the activities and co-ordinate with the BSG.

In the beginning, the implementation is taken up in 2 clusters. The responsibility for implementation at the cluster level rests with the BSG or an established NGO wherever available. The cluster personnel take up environment building activities through personal contacts and traditional and modern media. The environment building aims at creation of a stir among people for pursuing a common goal of UPE. Environment building creates an awareness among the village community to send their children to school or non-formal education centres. People are motivated to participate in the educational planning and management.

When the villagers come forward, a core team, called Prerak Dal - literally meaning 'motivational group', in every village is set up with women members constituting one-third to half the membership. A separate women's group is also set up. The members of these groups are trained and empowered through sharing of information. The emphasis in training is on confidence building, creating genuine interest in children's, particularly girls', education and on learning the techniques of preparing the village map, household survey, survey of the school or NFE centre, if any, and analysing the educational status of the village. After the training, the core teams undertake the responsibility of reviewing the educational status of their respective villages through preparation of village map, information gathered from house to house contact, preparing statistical summary of all information and discussing the matter in village assembly.

In the meantime, the women's group engages the community on issues of the girl child – her status and education. Women's group also mobilise the women of the village in bringing about a change in the perception regarding education of girls and their role in the family and society. Women groups also raise voice collectively against social injustice towards their fellow women in the village.

Based on the analysis of educational status of the village, the core team makes proposals with necessary assistance of the LJ's cluster and block personnel for improvement of the educational facilities of the village. The proposals thus prepared

are taken to the Block Educational Management Committee (BEMC). BEMC is a body formed in every block by Lok Jumbish to examine the proposals and take decisions for creation of primary educational facilities. This committee is constituted by taking representatives of the local self-government, the state government and Lok Jumbish. A local educationist is appointed as honorary Chairman. The state government has empowered this committee to review the situation and take decisions regarding the creation of educational facilities based on specified norms approved by the state government. The plan approved by BEMC for improvement in formal schooling facilities are implemented by the state government whereas for non-formal education are implemented by Lok Jumbish.

Simultaneously, a Building Construction Committee (BCC) is set up in those villages where repair of existing school buildings has to be undertaken. The members of BCC are also imparted training regarding the process of management of the building construction work, maintenance of the buildings, opening up of a bank account in the name of BCC, record keeping etc. Certain amount of money is collected by the BCC from the villagers towards their contribution to school building and a bank account is opened with this money. LJ transfers money to this account. The proper utilisation of the money for construction work then becomes the responsibility of the BCC.

Members of the village level core team, women's group and BCC, who give evidence of dedicated work, are selected to become a part of the Village Education Committee(VEC). LJ emphasises on identification of strong and committed persons to be included as members in VEC. The VEC undertakes micro-planning to ensure enrolment of all children, their regular attendance and retention till they complete primary education.

School-Mapping

The series of process, starting from environment building to submission of proposed village education plan to BEMC, and formation of VEC, is known as School Mapping (SM) in LJ. LJ has used SM as the principal instrument for people's participation and generation of child-wise authentic information.

The database generated through SM follows some steps:

- Creation of the initial Naksha Nazri (the village map) based on initial information about the village.

- Establishing contact and generating genuine information through actual survey of each family, filling up a performa containing details of every child in the age-group of 3 to 14 years in the family and their educational status, noting down the reasons if not participating in education;

- Preparation of Village Education Register (VER) by putting together the survey sheets of every household. The VER thereafter becomes a source of authentic information regarding the actual participation of children in primary education. It is actually an alternative to the mere enrolment data

collected from school register.

- Survey of the schools or NFE centres, if any, in the village;

- Creation of the final Naksha Nazri. All school going and non-school-going boys and girls from every family are shown through symbols and different colours in the map. The symbols and colours get easily communicated even to an illiterate person. Thus, this map serves as a visual data base. Any villager can locate his/ her house in the map and can also compare the status of his/her children regarding primary education in the context of overall status of the village and also in comparison to the children of other families.

Micro-Planning

Micro-planning starts after the required educational infrastructure becomes available in the village. Micro-planning in LJ is seen as family-wise and child-wise planning and monitoring undertaken basically by the members of VEC and cluster personnel of LJ with the help of the village community. VEC identifies unenrolled children from the VER, contacts the concerned families and undertakes activities to ensure regularity of attendance and retention of children in schools.

In addition to VER, micro-planning is followed up through three instruments:

Praveshotsav - literally meaning - 'Festival of Entry' - refers to the festival like arrangement made in the schools on a specific day in the beginning of a new academic year to celebrate the occasion of

children taking admission in the schools for the first time. It was observed that many children were scared of the schools and teachers and used to cry when their parents brought them for admission. Consequently, most of them could not gather interest either in the studies or in attending schools regularly. Their parents were also not found to be keen to send them to the schools. In this backdrop, to overcome the dull and gloomy atmosphere of the school, Lok Jumbish workers in Chhohtan block organised children's fair in the school campus to attract children as an innovation. This was found to be very effective and subsequently adopted as 'Praveshotsav' in all blocks of Lok Jumbish.

The basic objectives of Praveshotsav are to:

- create a positive and creative environment for education amongst children, the school and the community;

- develop a sense of responsibility among parents for education of their children;

- create and observe dignity and respect to the teachers;

- ensure that school starts functioning from the beginning of the session; and

- remove the environment of fear among children and create a cordial relationship between the teacher and children, particularly the new entrants.

Organisation of Praveshotsav with these objectives yielded highly encouraging results in terms of increase in enrolment in the schools. The Praveshotsav is now invariably organised in every

school during the first week of every new academic session to formally entertain the children on their first day in school.

Retention Register has been introduced in all schools and NFE centres to find out the progress of each child once he/she is enrolled. It helps to see whether a boy or a girl who enrols in grade I, completes grade V, and whether he/she passes grade V in stipulated 5 years. All children are listed in this register and after every few months the status of each child is followed up. It also reflects whether a school or NFE centre is functioning satisfactorily. The tendency of showing enhanced enrolment is discouraged in this register.

Village Education Plan prepared initially by the core team becomes a basis for continuous follow-up by VEC. The village education plan is repeatedly reviewed and improved upon by the VEC with special attention to improvement of enrolment, retention and quality of education and the suggestion for further improvement is presented to BEMC for consideration.

Focus on Gender Equity

LJ aims at providing access to education to every girl child. Girls enrolment and retention is seen as the principal indicator of the project's performance. LJ also believes that education serves as an instrument of women's equality. Gender equity is attempted to be established through 'feminisation of the education system' – appropriate mode of education accessible to girls, curriculum content, teachers' training, facilities in schools, improvement in the school environment,

recruitment of women at every level, empowerment of women teachers and students.

Gender equity in LJ is a goal as well as principal strategy. Gender sensitivity permeates all programmes and processes. Working conditions in the field are very difficult and women workers face serious problems that are rooted in the patriarchal tradition of Rajasthan. LJ management takes cognisance of this issue. The status of gender equity in LJ is constantly reviewed. Based on this analysis, LJ management has devised appropriate strategies to interweave gender in management as well as in all programme components. Women workers at every level are considered as indispensable and appointment of women in specific proportion has been made mandatory. An effort is made to enable women staff to function as equals. Firm steps are taken to create secured working conditions which are gender sensitive. Women colleagues have a right to be heard before a gender sensitive forum if they face difficulty in their working conditions. Finally, special training programmes are organised for women separately to build self-confidence, and then jointly with men to ensure that men and women are able to work together in a spirit of mutual respect and equal status.

There is a state level committee called 'Samvadika' which reviews the overall status and concept of gender equity in LJ and provides suggestions for improvement. This committee consists of nationally renowned professionals and women activists in addition to represntatives from NGOs and LJ. At the block level, out of a team of 5, one position, Samyukta, is reserved for a woman. Her

responsibility is to interpret the idea of gender equity in every action and management in the field. At the cluster level, 3 out of 4 personnel are women. Besides, a Field Centre is established in every cluster to facilitate women centred development activities and mobilisation.

Initially, LJ had difficulty in finding women workers required at the cluster level. This is even more true in cases of educationally the most backward areas. Two institutes, called Women Residential Institute for Training and Education or Mahila Shikshan Vihar, have been established for education and training of prospective workers of LJ. These institutes are located at Jalor, the lowest rural female literacy district, and Jhalawar, where more than one third of the villages has no literate female (Refer map). More than 100 women have already received education up to grade VIII and vocational training. About 20 of them have been already engaged as field workers of LJ.

Principal Innovations for Primary Education

LJ makes arrangement for alternative modes of primary education depending on the specific needs of a given locality/area as identified at the time of school mapping. The main modes are:

Sahaj Shiksha Programme

Sahaj Shiksha programme (SSP) is the non-formal education programme of LJ. This programme has developed as a parallel and complementary system to formal education. SSP aims at providing education to:

- children residing in small habitations,

- working children,

- girls who have to look after their siblings and attend to other domestic chores and

- children who are 9 years old and above and cannot, therefore, be admitted to school.

The main clientele of SSP are girls and the concept of the programme has taken this factor into account. Consequently, three principles were evolved to govern SSP: (i) To establish equivalence with the formal school system. This is attempted in two ways. By encouraging children to transfer from SS centres to schools and by making efforts to ensure that the quality of instruction in SS is equivalent to the school system. (ii) Making both the formal and non-formal education system to learn from each other and be benefited from the strengths of each other (iii) Allowing enough flexibility in all organisational aspects.

Selection and training of Sahaj Shiksha instructor called 'Anudeshak' is based on similar approach as in case of Shaiksha Karmis. They are selected by the villagers and undergo 30 days induction training followed by subsequent on the job trainings. A 2-day workshop of Anudeshaks is held every month. The curriculum, textbooks and the system of pupil evaluation are on the lines of the formal schools.

The responsibility of the management of the SSP has been squarely placed with the mobilising agencies at the cluster level. They have to take care of all aspects of the programme, particularly

those that affect quality. A specially selected and trained supervisor called 'Pravartak' is appointed for about 15 centres to ensure that every centre is visited at least once every month. Sandhan Training Institute is responsible for training of Anudeshaks and all LJ field personnel associated with Sahaj Shiksha programme. NGOs like Digantar and Alaripu have been implementing an independent curriculum on experimental basis in some of the Sahaj Shiksha centres.

Besides, a comprehensive Management Information System has been laid down which enables people at the cluster and block levels to identify the strengths and the problems at the SS centres. The programme is regularly evaluated at the cluster and block levels. In addition, a state level committee reviews the progress and quality of the programme every two months. This committee includes specialists of national and international repute in addition to the representatives of the state government and LJ.

Balika Shikshan Shivir(BSS)

BSS are short term residential camps for adolescent girls many of whom are married and have missed the opportunity of schooling in their right age of school entry due to lack of access and family compulsions. Some of the LJ workers, while on a visit to Hyderabad, saw a number of residential education camps for child labourers being run successfully by a famous NGO called M.V. Foundation in Andhra Pradesh. This mode seemed appropriate for the adolescent girls specially since children in these camps learnt faster and also got empowered as a result of special

activities organised for them. From January 1997 to May 1997, four camps were organised on an experimental basis. About 400 girls joined these camps, about 20 per cent of them achieved education of class IV and 45 per cent completed education up to class III. The rest of them mostly completed class II and a few straggled around class I. Besides acquiring the laid down competencies in 3 R's, these girls also learnt about health and sanitation and became self-confident and better informed.

Parental and community response was overwhelmingly favourable. After leaving their wards under the charge of teachers in the camps, they kept coming back to the camp to keep themselves abreast about girls' progress in studies. It helped create a favourable environment for girls' education back in the villages and generated demand for more such camps.

Inspired by the success of first series of camps, a second series of 14 camps was started in November-December 1997. Experience of the first series of camps showed that the camps were needed to be six months long to enable girls to reach grade IV or V. The duration of the second series of camps were thus decided as 6 months. But at the end of six months about 20 per cent of the girls completed education upto Vth standard and another 12 to 15 per cent of the girls were at the stage of nearing completion. It was therefore decided to extend the duration of the camps by about one more month to enable these girls to complete at least the level of primary education. About 1400 girls received education in this series of camps. This time, 84 per cent of the girls

completed education of class III and above, 32.5 per cent, in fact, completed the basic primary stage education up to class V. With the financial help of UNICEF Association of Tokyo, 6 more camps have been organised during 1998-99. Two of these six camps were follow up camps for the girls who completed their studies up to standard III and IV in earlier camps and needed some more time to complete education up to standard V. The remaining 4 camps were for freshers.

Each of the BSS attracted girls from about 12 to 20 villages located within a diameter of 25 kms. or so. None of them were literate not to speak of being associated with any formal or non-formal schooling system earlier. They belong to educationally very backward areas and low income families. Except for a few, their parents are also illiterate, but given a chance for meaningful education under proper security conditions, the parents especially the mothers were found to be very keen to send them for acquiring education. As can be seen from the map, these camps have been organised basically in desert and tribal areas of Rajasthan.

Urdu Education

Several blocks of Rajasthan have a large Muslim population. This is particularly true of the blocks in Alwar and Bharatpur districts falling in the Mewat region dominated by Meos. Meos are a Muslim community - agriculturists and cattle breeders.

Kaman block is one of the LJ blocks falling in Bharatpur district. Approximately 70 per cent of the total population of this block are Meos. The block is educationally backward, overall literacy rate being about 26 per cent. Literacy rate among the Meos being as low as 19 per cent with negligible literacy among women.

School-mapping in 1993-94 undertaken by the LJ workers revealed that nearly 60 per cent of boys and 90 per cent of girls belonging to Meo community were not attending school. But a large number of them were going to local mosques for religious instruction. Such instruction did not include any modern Indian language or Mathematics, resulting in exclusion of all these children from the educational mainstream. Interaction of LJ functionaries with the Meo families in the villages revealed that no real effort had been made to draw these children to schools. There was lack of mutual confidence between the teachers and the village community. The Meos wanted their children to learn Urdu which was not a part of the syllabus in formal schools. They were also unhappy about educational standards at the schools.

The LJ functionaries felt that with support from Imams of the mosques it was possible to persuade the parents to send their children to schools. Involving local people and school teachers in the school mapping activity helped removing mutual isolation between the school and the community. With effect from July 1995, a new programme of Madrassah Education was initiated in 13 schools. In each of these schools, the building was repaired, necessary equipment provided and Urdu introduced as a subject of study by appointing a trained Urdu teacher called Urdu Shiksha Karmi.

Academic qualifications for Urdu Shiksha Karmi were the same as laid down by Director of Primary & Secondary Education for primary level Urdu teacher. Selections were made through open competition. 3 supervisors have also been appointed. Medium of instruction in these schools continued to be Hindi but Urdu has been introduced from class I as an additional subject.

The response to this initiative has been very positive. The impact of the scheme on the enrolment has been dramatic. The participation rate of Meo boys in primary education has increased from 42.19 per cent to 82.21 per cent within a period of 3 years. The impact on girls enrolment has been more encouraging, the participation rate in case of girls has increased from only 11.05 per cent to 57.00 per cent during the same 3-year period. There has been tremendous demand for the scheme. Consequently the scheme has now been extended to 80 schools of Kaman block of Bharatpur district(Refer map).

Muktangan

Muktangan is an open school, created in 1998 for villages with very difficult circumstances as far as access is concerned. The word 'Muktangan' literally means a campus remarkable for a sense of freedom. Muktangan first came into being in a cluster called Khandela of Kishanganj block in Baran district. Khandela has a very difficult situation as far as access to education is concerned. There are 24 villages in the cluster. Nearly 60 per cent of the population is Saharias, a tribal community known for extreme educational and economic backwardness. Khandela has 3 upper

primary schools and 11 primary schools out of which only 1 UPS and 3 PS function with regularity. In the remaining schools, the teachers are irregular and the schools open for 3 or 4 days in a month. There are either no building or they are in a dilapidated condition. Apart from the 4 villages where schools do run, practically all the children are deprived of education. Even in villages where schools are running, a vast majority of girls are out of school.

On closer examination, it was found that in addition to total failure of formal school system, Khandela could not be provided with the two established alternatives - namely Sahaj Shiksha centres and Shiksha Karmi schools, as the villages did not have educated persons who could be appointed as Anudeshak or Shiksha Karmis.

After a very detailed and meticulous exercise to review the situation and to find solution to the problem, it was decided to start Muktangan in 17 villages with para teachers. These para-teachers, called Muktaks (literally meaning one who practices freedom of action) were to be drawn from nearby localities but would have to stay in the villages in which they would teach. The Muktaks should have the minimum educational qualification of standard XII in case of males and of standard Xth in case of females. The difficulties regarding availability of space for Muktangans and accommodation for Muktaks were taken cognisance of. It was decided that in respect of each village a survey should be undertaken to assess the situation and to make beginning with some makeshift arrangements till proper structures could be put up. LJ management was assured

that the village community could come forward with necessary help for putting up makeshift structures.

A series of meetings took place. These meetings involved representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutes, village leaders, LJ personnel at all levels in Kishanganj block and possible resource teams which could help in organisation of training of Muktaks.

True to the nature of problems which they solve, Muktangans were given some very specific features:

- *Flexible Timetable*: A Muktangan is expected to remain open for about 8 hours. Depending on their convenience, students are to be grouped into batches over-lapping one another.

- A Muktangan is supposed to run throughout the year. Holidays are to be observed on days of local fairs and festivals. Vacations are to be during sowing and harvesting seasons so as to allow children to help their parents in fields.

The 17 Muktangans in Khandela area have been operational since October 1998. There is a total of 50 Muktaks, half of them women. The specially designed structures for making provision of stay of the Muktaks and also holding classes in the same building are being constructed. Till the time the structures are fully constructed, teaching takes place in the open or under the shade of a tree. Some villagers have provided their courtyard for the purpose. The village community is enthusiastic. All the Muktaks reside in the villages where they

work. The village community has provided some kind of accommodation for them.

Since December 1998, this experimental project is also being implemented in 20 villages of another very backward block called Kotra in Udaipur district. The Muktaks have undergone 40 days induction training. Resource support by way of training of the Muktaks and the curriculum development are being extended by NGOs.

Other Programmes

In addition to the above, some special efforts are also made to include deprived children under the coverage of primary education.

In a few blocks, 'low-cost' hostels have been started in consultation with and support of the villagers. Assurance from the parents are sought to take up responsibilities for the functioning of the hostels. Some short-term hostel facilities are also provided for a period of 4 months to children whose parents migrate temporarily during agricultural season.

Some special programmes, in a few selected blocks, have been initiated to integrate physically disabled children with the normal children in schools.

A large number of rural children suffer from persistent illness. Often such illness remain unnoticed and uncared for. This is especially true for girls and the children belonging to the disadvantaged groups. School Health Programme has been initiated in LJ to create awareness among

children regarding their health conditions and to suggest feasible remedial measures. Two NGOs, namely Rajasthan Voluntary Health Association and Vihan are helping with implementation of this programme.

LJ Efforts Towards Quality Improvement in Formal Schools

Overall quality improvement programme in LJ consists of four components:

- Curriculum reform;

- Teachers' training;

- Standardising school equipment and equipping schools to facilitate teaching-learning processes; and

- Building Development Programme

Curriculum Reform

Curriculum reform in LJ refers to introduction of competency based curriculum in line with the Minimum Levels of Learning competencies spelt out by the national level Dave Committee (1991). These competencies have been reviewed thoroughly from the view point of bringing about qualitative improvement in the levels of learning of the children. The competencies suggested by Dave Committee for Mathematics and Hindi (the language) were reviewed and adapted after some modifications. For Environmental Studies, an entirely new set of competencies based on process skills formed

the basis of curriculum development. Correspondingly the earlier textbooks were reviewed with reference to curriculum reform and new textbooks have been developed by a group of experts, teachers and illustrators. Care has been taken to make the printing and production of the new textbooks more attractive. The curriculum reform is supplemented with new teaching methods based on child-centred and activity-based learning.

To start with, MLL based textbooks and teaching methodologies were introduced only in 45 schools in 1992. Now it extends to more than 6000 schools in about 58 development blocks where LJ is working. 13 textbooks cum workbooks have been developed and are being used in classes I to V. Proper care has been taken to make all curriculum content and teaching-learning materials gender neutral. Apart from textbooks, supplementary materials for teachers in the form of books and leaflets have been prepared by Sandhan so as to facilitate child-centred teaching-learning process. To make teachers more creative, a contingency fund of Rs.500 to 750 is provided to each school for developing low cost teaching aids with the help of students. This has generated confidence among teachers and they have become more aware of the importance of hands-on-activities with students.

The State Resource Team (SRT) set up in 1993 provides guidance for implementation and monitoring of MLL programme in LJ. The members of SRT includes educationists of the national and international levels in addition to

representatives of the government and LJ.

Teachers' Training

LJ has taken into account the reduced self-esteem among teachers and the resulting casualness amongst them. It realises that the situation cannot change simply by official fiat or threat of disciplinary action. It tries to achieve its goal in this regard by involving teachers at all stages of educational planning, by discouraging use of deprecatory language towards them and by recognising the important role played by their associations.

Teachers' training is, therefore, given the central place in the strategy to improve quality of education under LJ. The trainings emphasise both on sensitization of teachers and sharpening their pedagogical skills. Trainings are held during summer vacation in two to four phases so that teachers can choose the phase of their convenience. Prior to the training, a dialogue is initiated with the teachers and they are motivated to attend the training. There are two types of training:

Motivational teacher training: The purpose of these 5-day residential training is to sensitize teachers and bring about attitudinal changes among them through activities designed to address physical, mental, emotional and behavioural levels of the teachers.

Competency-based teacher trainings: Ten to twelve days residential training are held to improve teaching capabilities. In these training,

the concept of MLL, transaction of curriculum in the classroom through active learning and child-centred processes, pupil evaluation, communication skills, pedagogical skills are all taken up. Much importance is given to the training culture in which teachers feel wanted and seen as partners in learning. Conscious efforts are made so that the training management and methodology reflect this training culture. The training is linked with a back up support system in the form of monthly meetings/workshops of teachers, visits to the schools by various functionaries.

Sandhan - the same NGO which provides training support to the Shiksha Karmis also provide the support to Lok Jumbish for all kinds of teachers' training. Besides the motivational and competency based training, some new initiatives have been taken to develop teachers professionally and personally. These training include Vipassana, Preksha, Dhyana, Yoga and Shikshak Samakhya. These are based on the meditative techniques to discover the treasure within.

To start with the residential training, it was found that very few women teachers take part. Hence, Women Teachers' Forums called 'Adhyapika Manch' was started on an experimental basis in one block. Women teachers found these forums an effective medium for coming out of isolation and to feel empowered. These forums have become an important vehicle for building the self-image of women teachers and consequently that of women groups in villages. Most of the blocks in which LJ is working has Women

Teachers' Forums now.

Standardising School Equipment and Equipping Schools to Facilitate Teaching-Learning Process

The survey of schools at the time of school-mapping revealed that the existing school equipment and teaching aids are of unsatisfactory quality and remain mostly unused. In view of this, a need analysis was done in consultation with teachers, curriculum planners, teacher educators and agencies involved in production and development of educational materials. Thereafter, a market survey was done and samples of various items were collected for standardisation and working out norms for supply. The Bureau of Indian Standards (ISI), New Delhi and Birla Institute of Scientific Research, Jaipur, were consulted. The possible uses of new materials like poly-art sheets, melamine sheets, particle boards etc. were examined so as to improve the quality of charts, globes and blackboards. Based on this exercise, the specifications of essential items for primary schools have been worked out. Purchase procedures have also been streamlined and made transparent. Use of teaching-learning materials are made an integral part of classroom processes in the teachers' training programmes. The process of standardisation of school equipment and teaching aids is visualised as an on-going process.

Building Development

Most of the school buildings throughout the country have massive maintenance and repair problems, aggravated by neglect. School buildings in Rajasthan are no exception, more so the buildings constructed with poor supervision under employment generation programmes. These are very much prone to leakage. The designs showed a lack of understanding of local needs and amenities such as drinking water and toilets. The windows are not properly located and the classrooms remain dark and dingy. Keeping in view the deficiencies in the existing buildings, LJ decided to give priority to repairs and maintenance to make the schools functional.

To construct buildings as per the specific requirement of a locality and using the locally available low cost materials and also to develop a system of community participation in construction and maintenance of school buildings, LJ sought specialised inputs from national level engineers and architects. Survey done under R & D conducted by the consultants revealed that 80 per cent of the school buildings require repair. With the suggestions and efforts of the consultants, LJ has been able to construct and repair school buildings which are attractive and child-friendly. This entire process is carried out with the active participation of the village community through the Building Construction Committee.

Lok Jumbish Management

When LJ project was being planned, no clear design or structure of management was thought of. Only a few principles and postulates were spelt out. The management system evolved as a response to the needs which emerged and also pose challenges for programme improvement. As of now, Lok Jumbish offers a design of administration of education which enable people

to manage, and wherever necessary, modify the delivery system. This is in contrast to a centrally designed, hierarchically controlled, tradition governed system, with in-built inflexibility, which eliminates the weaker sections of society from receiving effective access to the opportunities which can improve their lot. To begin with, it was visualised that the organisational manifestation of Lok Jumbish would be the Village Education Committee. People connected with the basic education system would be re-oriented to perceive a shift of accountability from a hierarchical system of a line of Inspectors appointed by the government Departments to an organised forum of the village community. A systematic effort has, therefore, been made to inform and train all people concerned and to ensure that people who can facilitate implementation of the programme are co-opted into it. The management system of Lok Jumbish is based on the principles of working on mission mode and primacy for women.

Right from the beginning, Lok Jumbish Parishad has been set up as an autonomous and independent organisation headed by a Director and a team of 15-20 Faculty members. The style of management is characterised by matrix system which implies that each faculty member has responsibility for one or more subject areas and also has to deal with all aspects of LJ processes in a geographical area. At the state level, there is an advisory and policy making council headed by the Chief Minister of Rajasthan and an Executive Committee chaired by an experienced educational administrator/an eminent educationist. The Executive Committee has the full administrative and financial powers. Members of the Executive

Committee include representatives of the government and a number of educationists.

Initially, LJ had no structure at the district level. Eventually, to facilitate the co-ordination of work in a number of blocks undertaken for operationalisation in the same districts, five offices of Area Coordinators have been set up at the district head quarters of five districts, viz., Ajmer, Kota, Bikaner, Jodhpur and Dungarpur (Refer map). However, the function of Area Co-ordinator is not administrative and managerial as such but is to co-ordinate between the state headquarter and the blocks and extend support to the block and cluster team for doing their work more efficiently.

At the block level, Lok Jumbish has a block steering group(BSG). A whole-time women's development activist is a member of BSG. At the block level also the matrix style of management is employed. This has helped team building.

LJ management is characterised by in-built review and planning processes. Review and Planning meetings (RPM) are held at every level where LJ functionaries collectively observe, measure the progress and transform the whole process into a problem solving methodology. Representatives of partner NGOs participate in the planning and review process in LJ at every level. RPMs take place at the state level once every quarter. At the levels of the block and cluster RPM is a monthly phenomenon serving the following functions:

a.   collection of MIS proforma

b.   preparation and review of action-plans;

c. RPM has emerged as a system of evaluation

d. a forum for continuous training in articulation and developing a sense of pride for the work done;

e. a forum in which feed back from the field is shared and also information coming from the higher levels are shared with the field workers.

f. bringing the reflection and action together to support effective, decentralised planning.

Over the years, RPMs have helped LJ in creation of a new, participatory culture of management, which is based on collective review and systematic and practical evolutionary planning process. From the very beginning of LJ, Sandhan Rsearch Centre has contributed significantly to bring about clarity in conceptualisation of major programmes and strategies through continuous and on-going evaluation through participatory appraisals.

To facilitate the decentralised management, a very well thought out Management Information System (MIS) has been developed over the years through interactive meetings among cluster and block level functionaries. MIS is expected to be used as a ready-reckoner for reviewing the working status as well as processes at every level. Both qualitative and descriptive information generated through MIS are used as tools for

■ consensus building among the group members at every level;

■ improvement of quality of the processes involved;

■ enhancing involvement of every individual concerned with the activities;

■ monitoring the progress made

■ creating a data base for both ready reference and analytical purposes; and

■ preparing the monthly and quarterly action-plans.

The information is generated regarding all programme components and also regarding the financial management and personnel. Specific proformas have been developed which are expected to be filled up in consultation with all actors concerned. There are three levels of origin of information, viz., village, cluster and block, the information flowing from the one level to the next. Information received in the HQ are compiled and computerised . It may be worth mentioning that right from the beginning, a deliberate decision was taken in LJ not to divert attention of the workers towards generation of data meant for only record keeping but to collect relevant information in such a manner so that the collectors or generators of data themselves identify their action based on the collected information. Accordingly, at the decentralised levels, information gathered systematically through MIS are extensively used for review of the performance at every level. Formulation of Action Plan at both cluster and block levels is also based on such information. The qualitative and descriptive information are used for better management of the day to day activities. It is now felt that a stage has been reached after more than 7 years of operationalisation that LJ workers must also be able to review the results of

their activities in the villages. A system of reverse flow of compiled information from the headquarters to the block has thus been initiated. This reverse flow from block to the cluster and from cluster to the villages is yet to be established.

LJ management observe flexibility in staff selection. The personnel at all levels have been drawn from different background and with diverse qualifications, but in a collective commitment to serve the country through spread of education. Training of the staff at all levels is a continuing process. Most of the field workers are often separated from their families and work in difficult circumstances, but they receive strong support from their colleagues and the system itself. Besides. workers can expect elevation if their work is good.

| Phase I | - | June 1992 – June 1994 |
| Phase II | - | July 1995 – June 1998 |

Clearance of phase II proposal took nearly one year. This year was utilised to rectify deficiencies and to consolidate various programmes started in phase I. The processing and clearance of phase III proposals entered into a variety of hurdles and uncertainties (Refer challenges discussed under section VI of this paper). Phase II was thus required to be extended. The coverage till June 1999 extended to 75 development blocks belonging to 27 districts of Rajasthan. The current status of work is as follows:

Performance of LJ

Measuring achievement of a people's mobilisation of the kind envisaged in LJ cannot be confined to

Villages taken up for environment building	:	8825
Core Teams formed	:	7885
Women's Groups formed	:	6071
Building Construction Committee formed	:	1499
Villages where school mapping completed	:	7286
New Primary Schools opened	:	431
PS upgraded to UPS	:	264
Sahaj Shiksha Kendras opened	:	3410
Schools in which MLL introduced	:	6149

Coverage and Performance

Coverage

LJ has completed two phases of operationalisation:

narrow boundaries. The villages in which Lok Jumbish is working, it can be perceived easily that the people have become aware of their predicament, have begun to come together and move towards organised action for betterment of

their living and working conditions. LJ achievement may be summarised as below.

Achievement of Universalisation of Primary Education (UPE)

Under National Policy on Education 1986 (revised in 1992) enrolment, retention and improvement of achievement levels are the three elements of UPE. In respect of each, the position in LJ is as follows:

- Data generated through school-mapping have been compiled and computerised. These show that participation rate of girls in primary education in LJ areas has increased by 10-11 per cent per annum and that of boys by 4-5 per cent per annum.

- Retention rate calculated on the basis of data collected from the formal schools indicate that the retention rate has improved @ about 2 per cent per annum.

- Systematic benchmark and 2-yearly post-tests are undertaken in LJ to measure improvement in achievement of learning of language and mathematics. The results of these tests revealed that the rate of improvement in learning achievement of children in schools, where MLL has been introduced by LJ, is about 7-8 per cent for both the subjects.

Achievement in Sahaj Shiksha Programme

Perhaps the most effective LJ strategy for focus on girl child and to organise empowering education for them is Sahaj Shiksha. Unlike most NFE programmes in government, LJ's Sahaj Shiksha has been immensely successful both in its objectives and management. Sahaj Shiksha centres mostly cater to the need of the girls. The quality of education in Sahaj Shiksha is as good as in formal schools. Reproductive health education is given to adolescent girls and Adolescent Girls' Forums are set up to enable the students to go for excursions, learn music, dancing, art, theatre, etc., and to have access to a village library.

SSP has been evaluated by the Operations Research Group(ORG), a leading evaluation agency of India. They have noted that there is widespread acceptability of SSP in the community. The high level of achievement of the learners has changed the image of NFE from a second best programme for the poor to one, which provides education equivalent to the school system and is much in demand. Three fourth of the children enrolled are girls. Many of these girls would have remained deprived of primary education but for these centres. ORG writes that SSP presents a design of a successful alternative to the school system. The programme is being recognised as a successful programme by agencies outside the state of Rajasthan. In fact, the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the central government aims at revamping the government NFE in line with SSP.

Achievement in Community Participation through School Mapping and Micro-planning

School-mapping of Lok Jumbish has been studied by UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), Paris in conjunction with National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration

(NIEPA), New Delhi. This study has found the school-mapping process as a very effective means of community mobilisation. The manner in which school mapping evolved from a technique for school location to the one which forms the base for micro-planning has been considered as remarkable by the study. This study also noted the manner in which women's involvement has led to improved motivation for girls' education.

Achievement in Gender Issues

A large number of well-planned steps taken in LJ to ensure gender equity and focus on girl child has led to reduction in the gap in enrolment and retention between boys and girls, formation of very strong women groups in villages, formation of an independent forum for women teachers'. Women's groups have been formed in 6071 villages out of 8825 in which LJ work is in progress. These groups attempt to change value pattern among rural families, particularly towards girls' education. Women teachers' forums have been set up in 42 of the 75 blocks. Organisation of the Adolescent girls' residential camps has benefited over 2500 girls majority of whom are continuing their education in regular government schools. Short duration residential workshops are organised for school girls to enable them to become active learners, cope with the negative school environment through improved self confidence. Gender sensitivity in management has given strength to women and young girls to work in harsh working conditions.

Achievement in Govt.-NGO Collaboration

LJ has bridged the gap between government and

NGOs. Altogether 47 NGOs are now working as partners with LJ.

Achievement in Establishing a New Educational Planning and Management System

LJ system of decentralised planning and management provide space for child-wise and context based planning and management process. Decentralisation makes it possible to provide special educational arrangements to meet the needs of special group and geographical areas. For example, if predominantly Muslim areas asked for teaching of Urdu, arrangements could be made at the local level for the same. Similarly, seasonal hostels could be set up to ensure that children of parents who migrate seasonally do not dropout. The management system is also marked by commitment to quality - it is insisted upon in every sphere. Another signpost of management, particularly financial aspects, is transparency - this is insisted upon in all purchases, building programmes, etc. One of the characteristics of LJ's management which has been commended by the evaluation agencies as well as by external funding agencies (SIDA and DFID) is the in-built process of review and planning.

Overall what LJ has, perhaps, succeeded in doing is to enable the people to overcome cynicism towards development and towards the future of the country. They feel enabled, facilitated and empowered to understand issues in development, and seem to be gradually moving towards a spirit of self-reliance and mutual accountability of public system to the people and vice versa.

On being commissioned by the funding agencies

of LJ, all aspects of LJ have been evaluated by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai. This evaluation study has substantiated the achievements outlined above including those relating to the improved enrolment, retention and learning achievement. The study also found the management system very satisfactory and the capability and commitment of LJ field personnel quite unique.

Finance and cost

Financing

Phase I of LJ was for a modest two-year period. Funding was in the ratio of 3:2:1, by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Government of India and Government of Rajasthan respectively. The budget for this two-year period was about Rs 150 million, 95 per cent of which was utilised. 25 community development blocks were brought under operationalisation during this phase.

Phase II began in July 1995 for a 3-year period, with a budget of Rs. 800 million, later enhanced to Rs. 956.50 million. All the funds were fully utilised. Sharing among the funding partners was in the same ratio as before, viz. 3:2:1. Fifty new community development blocks were added during this phase, bringing the total to 75 blocks, extending the project to a population of about 12 million. All the blocks in five districts were brought under Lok Jumbish and the Government of Rajasthan transferred management of District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) of three of the districts to Lok Jumbish.

LJ Finance & Accounts Regulations have been framed with approval of the Govt. of Rajasthan. Financial management is characterised by decentralisation of financial powers and is based on transparency in all transactions. A system of regular internal checking of accounts to improve the accounting system has been built up. Each block has an accountant. All accounts personnel and officers responsible for implementation of the programme receive recurrent training. LJ account is annually Audited by the statutory Chartered Accountant as well by the Comptroller and auditor General of India.

A distinguishing feature of LJ's investment is that expenditure is not uniformly distributed in each block. In fact, different blocks of LJ are at different stages of operationalisation. Expenditure is allocated to each block as per their respective requirement. Activity-based unit costs have been calculated separately for each programme. Based on this standard unit costs and the respective action plans, every block has to calculate its financial requirements and send demand for the same to the headquarters.

Cost-effectiveness

It is not an easy task to calculate cost-effectiveness of Lok Jumbish project. Calculating per student cost does not appear to be a meaningful exercise in view of the fact that LJ intervenes not only in the schools or non-formal education centres but also in the community. Besides, LJ investment in formal schools are in addition to and over and above the investment made by the government in the same schools. A sufficiently large amount of

LJ investment neither takes place in the formal schools or Sahaj Shiksha centres directly but are contributing towards better efficiency of the system.

Realising the complexity, an attempt has been made to analyse the details of LJ investment in one of the oldest blocks of LJ (called Garhi in Banswara district) vis-a-vis the amount of investment made by the state government on primary and upper primary schools in the same block. This revealed that over the period 1992-98, the state government has invested an amount of Rs.39.07 crore, on the PS and UPS, of which 85.4 per cent has been spent on teachers' salaries. In addition to this, LJ has invested another Rs.5.8 crore approximately during the same period. 22.3 per cent of this has been invested for repair and construction of school buildings, 46.2 per cent for creating additional facilities, 13.8 per cent for social mobilisation, 13.3 per cent for quality improvement and 4.4 per cent to create and maintain a decentralised management structure.

As against this investment, three-fourth of all the existing school buildings in the block have been repaired through BCC in the corresponding villages. 45 new primary schools have been opened and 13 primary schools upgraded to upper primary level, 77 additional teachers have been appointed and 273 Sahaj Shiksha centres have been opened. School-mapping has been done in all the villages. Core Groups and Women's Groups have also been formed. These groups undertake micro-planning regularly. Intervention in all the 269 schools of the block has been made with the quality improvement programme. 91 per cent of the teachers have been trained. All the schools supplied with teaching learning materials and school equipment, the students have also been supplied with textbooks and other learning materials like slates, bags, pencils etc.

All these intervention have resulted in creation of additional facilities to accommodate another 15,500 children in the primary education system in this block. Participation rate (enrolment rate) of children in primary education has improved by 36 per cent and in case of girls, by 46 per cent. The retention rate of children in formal schools has improved by 7 per cent, learning achievement of children have improved by 7 to 11 per cent in classes I and II for which tests have been conducted in Mathematics and Hindi (language). Besides, establishment of a BSG at the block level and cluster staff in all the 5 clusters of the block, has helped developing a system of effective monitoring and supervision for the overall activities in the block.

An alternative calculation of cost per child per annum has also been done for the 5 blocks taken up by LJ right from its initiation in 1992. This calculation shows that per child expenditure of LJ per annum varies from Rs. 229 to Rs. 248 as against the per student expenditure of Rs.1177 for the state of Rajasthan as a whole and Rs. 1209 for India as a whole in the year 1996-97.

The either way of cost calculation as mentioned above, has not taken into account the indirect cost and the opportunity cost of the voluntary work and financial contribution made by individuals and the villagers. The extra-efforts of LJ workers outside the specified duty hours is also not taken

into account. If these are measured and included, LJ will emerge as a more cost-effective project.

Thus, Lok Jumbish offers a design of an integrated project which takes care of every aspect of UPE. If an integrated project of this nature is initiated, other government schemes and programmes like mid-day meals, free uniform, Operation Black Board become redundant. The fund needed for sustaining such schemes may also become available to be directed towards an integrated project like LJ. This can take care of the optimum utilisation of the limited resources available for primary education on the one hand and reduce the wastage of resources on the other.

Lessons Learnt from Innovations

Strategies and Factors Contributing to the Success of SKP and LJP

The success of SKP and LJP may be ascribed to many factors and strategies. Some of these are described here.

Collaborative model with Autonomy and linkage of Implementing structure: SKP and LJP are strategically based on collaborative models with four sets of actors: (i) villagers, (ii) grass roots workers, who are capable of local mobilisation and flexible, creative ways of planning, management and teaching; (iii) Government of Rajasthan, with the support of the Government of India, which provides wherewithal and machinery for scale and sustainability; (iv) academics and NGOs who facilitate the training, curriculum development, make mid-term corrections and guide the revisions in planning.

The creation of Shiksha Karmi Board(SKB) and Lok Jumbish Parishad(LJP), as autonomous bodies to manage the projects, has been an important step. The SKB and LJP are neither the same system nor are they parallel or outside system. These autonomous bodies have both the space and stability to devise, implement and monitor, at the same time the Government has the responsibility to fund the programme and the authority to intervene in the delivery system. The state level resource institutions, local voluntary organisations, District level officials, Sandhan and

IDS, Block and Panchayat Samiti members are all linked together in a web and a delicate balance is maintained between autonomy and linkage

Giving recognition to the talent and emphasis on continuous training of workers and teachers: Appointment in various positions under SKP and LJP has not been identified with employment schemes. Rather, the potential that lay under the apparent ordinariness of the unemployed and underemployed youth has been recognised, nurtured and supported through a network of institution. For maintaining the motivation, SKP and LJP devote tremendous time, energy and effort in providing continuous training and support to the staff at all levels. This has enabled them to perform up to the high expectation of the community.

Using New Vocabulary for Altered functions: A shift in the position and style of a single function in a large system necessitates shifts in all related functions. Such shifts are seldom internalised by the functionaries concerned. Hence, in order to reinforce the initiated process for change, the intended alterations in functioning patterns needs to be demonstrated by the use of fresh vocabulary giving new role descriptions. SKP has systematically adopted this process. The new names are suggestive of this. 'Shiksha Karmi' - education worker rather than 'Gram Shikshak' - village teacher; 'Shiksha Karmi Sahyogi' rather than supervisor; Mahila Sahyogi - a woman who

escorts girls to schools; are all symbolic of internalisation of the new role. Learning from the success of SKP, LJP has also adopted this principle. Thus, NFE has been renamed as 'Sahaj Shiksha'. Similarly, the various designations, using Hindi terms, of the staff at different levels connote their functions.

Limited Claims and Demonstration of Results: SKP and LJP did not start with radical targets. These were modest in aim, gradual in practice, with the approval of the concerned community as a constant. One step at a time has been the motto. Identification and training of the staff and SKs/Anudeshaks received the major focus.

Willingness to learn from others: SKP and LJP have shown a welcome ability to learn from contextual experiences and to work in co-ordination with holistic initiatives. Both these projects also work in co-ordination with each other. SKP responds to the critical issues of teacher absenteeism, dysfunctional schools and school-less distant habitations even within the LJ project area. The introduction of new textbooks based on the concept of Minimum Levels of Learning, micro-planning based on school mapping and improvement in the quality of learning in Prahar Pathshalas are illustrations of SKP's interface with LJP. Besides, SKP has adopted the idea of Review and Planning meeting and democratisation of decision making from Lok Jumish. SKP provided some of the human resources for LJ and works with LJ towards increased access, retention and learning achievement of children in primary education system of Rajasthan.

Incentives and Career opportunities of SKs and other staff: To be a SK itself brings prestige and a special position to the person in the community. Although appointment of SKs are not identified with an employment scheme, appropriate financial and career incentive schemes have been introduced. SKs are paid a monthly honorarium @ Rs.1800/- for running both day schools and Prahar Pathshalas. A SK who completes 8 years of tenure in a satisfactory manner, attends all training programmes, and has attained matriculation certificate is eligible to be elevated to the status of regular teacher with concomitant benefits of salary and other service conditions. Besides, SKs are also given motivational and financial support to acquire higher educational qualifications through reimbursement of expenditure incurred on books and examination fees and duty leave for taking examinations. Many SKs have availed of these incentives and passed the secondary and senior secondary examinations after becoming SKs. In LJP as well, workers at all levels can expect elevation if their work is good.

Understanding the Basis of Innovations

From the insight of success of the two specific projects meant for achieving the goals of UPE, what appears important is to understand and recognise the factors which have contributed to the innovations in education in Rajasthan - the creativity, vision, optimism and faith of the people concerned. These have been complemented by conceptual clarity, emotional strength, investment of the time of many qualified, talented and warm people.

The innovative ideas and creative talents of the people of Rajasthan have survived in adverse circumstances. They have a tradition of community management of resources and have designed appropriate local techniques for agriculture, water management and animal husbandry. Although such qualities are not generally included in a demographic profile, the rich cultural heritage of the state does indicate the creativity of the people which definitely have played a very important role in the evolution of innovative efforts.

In terms of human development index, women of Rajasthan are placed at the bottom because it fails to take cognisance of their enterprising spirit and capability. Experience of social welfare and innovative programmes reveals that the women have immense inner strength and resilience and contribute significantly more than men. However, the economic and social structure is such that their contribution has all along been undermined.

A review of a series of the government programmes and schemes aiming at community development and social welfare programmes initiated and implemented in the state reveals that these programmes have been supported by dynamic and socially oriented administrators. The commitment of the administrators have been backed by the politically stable government.

A substantial credit of the development and success of innovative social development programmes in Rajasthan goes to the NGOs especially for implementation. There are a number of NGOs in the state working voluntarily for various developmental activities in a mission mode.

It is this already accomplished background which has led to successful implementation of the educational projects based on innovative strategies for achieving community participation and government-NGO partnership to ultimately achieve the goals of UPE.

Problems in Replicating Innovative Efforts

Many a time, success of an innovative effort is measured in terms of its replicability and cost-effectiveness. Based on the encouraging results emerged from some innovative actions, the state government decided to universalise these as an uniform programme to be implemented all over the state. But such attempts many a times have led to mechanisation and mutations of the original idea. This is evident from the following examples:

Case of Praveshotsav

Finding the impact of Praveshotsav to be very impressive in terms of increasing enrolment, Government of Rajasthan adopted the idea. Praveshotsav is now invariably organised in every school during the first week of each new academic session. Main activities include whitewashing and decoration of the school building and organising recreational activities for the children. Arrangements are made to formally honour the teachers and welcoming the newly enrolled children by garlanding and distribution of sweets etc.

Sadly, this has now become almost a mechanical process and an act of compulsion for the teachers to encourage enrolment drive. The objectives of Praveshotsav are not taken in the same spirit in which these were originally envisaged. As a result, inflation of enrolment at the beginning of the academic session does not match with the attendance and retention of children in the school throughout the year.

Case of School-mapping

Another example in point is that of school-mapping. Learning from the experience of Lok Jumbish, the state government instructed the teachers of all schools to conduct school-mapping of the respective villages in which the schools were located. The teachers were given two-days training to carry out the task. After going back from the training, school-mapping was done by all these teachers within a specified period of one week. They have all produced a visual map on a chart-sheet and a register which lists out the details of the families and the children of 6-14 age-group participating or not participating in primary education. The household survey proforma developed by Lok Jumbish was used for the purpose.

However, the very strengths of school-mapping process, to be used as a means of community participation and preparing a base for micro-planning to follow, have been missed out in the midst of generating only information and data base that too not ruling out the possibility of generating concocted information.

Case of Para-Teacher

Following the idea of Shiksha Karmi, para-teachers have been trained and appointed in many other states. 'Guruji' under Education Guarantee Scheme of Madhya Pradesh, the para-teachers under the Mabadi Project of Andhra Pradesh, the Education Activists under the M.V. Foundation of Andhra Pradesh, Volunteer teacher in Himachal Pradesh, Anudeshak under Sahaj Shiksha Programme and Muktak under Muktangan programme of Lok Jumbish, 'Saraswati Behan' under Saraswati Yojana of Rajasthan, para-teachers of PROPEL (Promoting Primary and Elementary Education) project of Maharashtra, teachers of Alternative schools under District Primary Education Project are all examples of para-teachers.

Experience of all these projects/programmes reveals that the idea of employing para-teachers have been effective only in cases where very strong training and supervisory support have been extended. Besides, all these programmes with para-teachers have been gradually expanded and tried at a much smaller scale here and there. Their implementation on a larger scale is yet to be tested. Coverage of Shiksha Karmi Project has gradually extended to 2,697 villages over a period of 11 years.

As against this, the very recent bold endeavour of the government of Rajasthan has been opening up of more than 12,000 para-teacher based Rajiv Gandhi Swarn Jayanti Pathshalas. To start with, all these para-teachers have undergone one month induction training at one go although the training were organised at different places and centres. The success of this endeavour will depend on maintaining the continuity of training and

establishing close contacts with each of these teachers by the local level ombudsmen for supervision as envisaged by the Panchayati Raj Department which is the concerned implementing Department of the Government of Rajasthan.

Emerging Issues and Specific Lessons Learnt

Experience of the past planning process in India reveals that reliance has been placed for too long on techno-bureaucratic solutions which have treated the people as beneficiaries, masses to whom certain benefits are given by those who know better and who control economic resources, social privilege and information channels. Planning for primary education is no exception.

Till mid-1980s, attempts have been made to achieve the goal of UPE only through supply-side intervention, i.e., opening of schools, appointing teachers and supplying the basic teaching learning materials etc. This was based on the implicit assumption that children do not join primary education because the schooling facilities are not available to them. However, this involved a lot of complexity. Firstly, the needs of children belonging to small clusters and isolated, scattered habitations are not served by such schools. Secondly, appointed teachers, usually belonging to distant places, cannot be regular in such schools. Thirdly, most of the out of school children are working either in the agricultural field, go for animal grazing, are engaged in the family business, working as child labourers or have to do household work. Hence, the school timings do not suit them. Fourthly, the social and caste groupings in some places prevent the children

of one caste to go to the same school where the children belonging to other caste group are also studying. Experiences of LJ and SK reveals that these barriers can best be removed through adoption of an appropriate process of school-mapping which helps removal of social, cultural and economic barriers in addition to solving the problem in terms of physical distance.

Understanding the concept of 'mainstreaming of education' should not be limited to the formal schooling only. The universal access demands ensuring provision of

- primary schools or non-formal education centres for every sizeable habitation, which may not be identical to an administrative unit like that of a revenue village in India.

- non-formal education of satisfactory quality for children who cannot avail of the benefit of day schools.

- alternative delivery modes of quality primary education facilities for children who can neither avail the benefits of formal schools or non-formal education centres, which includes child labourers, girls who are older in age and children of backward communities.

- hostels for children who cannot be provided schooling or NFE facility suitable to them – this would include children of families who reside in remote areas or migrate seasonally; and

- integrated education and special schools

for children with disability.

However, alternative modes of primary education are largely able to deliver the desired results, if people's involvement is achieved, the programmes monitored closely and support both managerial and academic are extended.

Universal attendance and retention of children in primary education take place automatically without any special incentive if the quality of education and the facilities provided are of the desired standards that fulfil the aspirations of the community, parents and children.

Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish projects offer models to assess the exact educational needs of the children, provide necessary support to fulfil the needs and create an environment for people to take care of their educational needs by themselves. For this to function, the decentralised planning and implementation become indispensable. However, decentralisation should not be limited to the administrative structure alone. Such attempts of decentralisation has led to policies focused on the needs of the people perceived by the decentralised administrative authorities rather than focusing on the specific needs as felt by the people themselves. To activate people centred decentralisation, i.e., enabling people to put forth their needs, making the right decisions and implementing of such decisions for themselves requires their empowerment as a pre-condition.

To sum up, operationalisation of both Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish projects point towards some common lessons. Some of these are as follows:

1. If schools of good quality are functional, parents will send their children and children will learn. This minimum requirement has to be met.

2. UPE has to be understood in the context of diversity. The requirements of the children and the community differ from place to place. Therefore, any strategy used for UPE must be context sensitive and therefore need not be uniform everywhere. Every such effort must precede proper diagnosis of the situation to understand the contextual diversity in which the children are living and plan of action determined accordingly.

3. Problems of the state managed delivery system can best be solved by moving out of the defined system of planning, implementation and evaluation. This could be through reaching out to the body of knowledge and skills in the non-government sector rather than restricting to the government sector alone. Because, the state authority may be insensitive and unable to grasp the aspirations of the common people. Sometimes the state authorities could even be oppressive. Such harsh face can be made people-oriented or even people centred only through frequent interaction with the civil society. Therefore, application and sustenance of fresh approach to planning, implementation and evaluation in the existing system requires not only on-going collaboration of different actors but also creation of new forums of decision making

supported by political will and administrative acceptance.

4. A delivery system can run efficiently over a stretch of time if an appropriate self-correcting process of management is designed and set into action. Building this process (such as RPM in Lok Jumbish) makes it possible to question the concepts of the project planning. Because in such process, rather than beginning with a pre-determined project parameters, the parameters are allowed to be evolved through action and reflection of the concerned role actors. Secondly, the idea of evaluation is altered in the process. Rather than evaluation becoming an external and distrustful exercise, it becomes a continuous process of self-reflection, problem-solving, planning and implementation. This is very important especially in view of the fact that

changes take place continuously in the basic environment in which the intervention is conceived and applied. Continuous rethinking and allowing for evolution of the entire planning thus becomes of utmost necessity. In the absence review, the gains achieved in one phase may get converted into stagnated schemes mismatched with contextual requirement in the next phase.

5. There is a need to develop processes for institutionalising community participation and to create a system in which the community feels empowered and are able to take initiatives. Any social development programme can be successful if the concerned people themselves can be inspired to rekindle their idealism, and if they can be aroused to work for a cause which they also perceive as in their interest.

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Acknowledgements

Appendix

Technical Note on Concentration Ratio

To put the variations forthwith, concentration ratio, a popular measure of inequality, has been worked out for specific variables. The results are

Concentration Ratio of
Percentage of villages with
nil male literacy   :   73.81
Percentage of villages with
nil female literacy   :   65.49
Literacy Rate   :   57.73
Percentage of ST population   :   89.99
Percentage of SC population   :   59.91
Gross Enrolment Ratio (I-VIII) :   56.31
Schools   :   59.91
Schools per 100 children
of 6-14 age group   :   56.53
Enrolment per school   :   57.25
Pupil-teacher Ratio   :   56.33

Concentration ratio has been worked out as follows:
$CR =$
Where CR = concentration ratio,
$x(i)$ = value of the variable
in i-th district, and X   = average value
of the variable for the state as a whole.

Value of CR varies between 100 and $100/\sqrt{n}$ where n is the total number of districts among which the variate values are distributed.

The theoretical limit of the concentration ratio is 100 if there exists extreme inequality and $100/\sqrt{n}$ if there is no inequality. Thus, nearer the value of concentration ratio to 100 more is the inequality and lower the value less is the inequality. Most of the calculated CR lie between 50 to 60 as against their minimum value of 17.67, for 32 districts of Rajasthan, implying a great deal of inequality. In cases of three indicators considered, the value of CR is even more implying more unequal distribution of these variables across the districts of Rajasthan. Existence of such inequality in the midst of geographic and socio-cultural diversity demand context specific interventions which have been attempted through Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish projects.

Note on the Map of Rajasthan

The map of Rajasthan have been downloaded from internet 'www.mapsofindia.com' . The location of various institutions etc. established by LJP or SKP have been superimposed by the author. The detail information regarding locations are as follows:

Location of the Mahila Prashikshan Kendras established by SKP are as follows:

1.   Dungarpur (Distt. Dungarpur)

2.   Wazirpur (Distt. Sawaimadhopur)

3.   Pratapnagar (Distt. Udaipur)

4.   Kunkanwal (Distt. Nagaur)

5.   Bharuka (Distt. Churu)

6.   Ramdeora (Distt. Jaisalmer)

7.   Nagaur (Distt. Nagaur)

8.   Sangod (Distt. Kota)

9.   Kumher (Distt. Bharatpur)

10.   Gulabpura (Distt. Bhilwara)

11.   Raipur (Distt. Pali)

12.   Malpur (Distt. Tonk)

13.   Pipar (Dist. Jodhpur)

14.   Bhim (Distt. Rajsamand)

Nine Regional Resource Units of SKP are:

1.   DIET, Bharatpur

2.   DIET, Jodhpur

3.   SIERT, Udaipur

4.   Resource Unit owned by SKP at Banswara

5.   Banwasi Kalyan Parishad, Udaipur

6.   Praud Shikshan Sansthan, Kota

7.   Sandhan, Jaipur

8.   Bajju, Bikaner*

9.   Mamoni, Shahbad*

*Now closed down.

Locations of Balika Shiksshan Shivirs organised by LJP are as follows:

1.   Osian (Block-Osian, Distt. Jodhpur)

2.   Bap (Block- Bap, Distt. Jodhpur)

3.   Lunkaransar (Block-Lunkaransar, Distt. Bikaner)

4.   Kolayat (Block- Kolayat, Distt. Ikaner)

5.   Phalodi (Block- Phalodi, Distt. Jodhpur)

6.   Bikaner (Block-Bikaner, Distt. Bikaner)

7.   Ramdeora (Block-Pokran, Distt. Jaisalmer)

8.   Udayramsar (Block-Bikaner, Distt. Bikaner)

9.   Dantore (Block-Bikaner, Distt. Bikaner)

10.   Mahajan (Block-Lunkaransar, Distt. Bikaner)

11.   Desuri (Block-Desuri, Distt. Pali)

12.   Bali (Block-Bali, Distt. Pali)

13.   Abu Road (Block-Abu Road, Distt. Sirohi)

14.   Nokha (Block-Nokha, Distt. Bikaner)

15.   Simalwara (Block-Simalwara, Distt. Dungarpur)

16.   Chohtan (Block-Chohtan, Distt. Barmer)

More than one camp has been organised in the same location in some of the camp sites.

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